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ABSTRACT

This document contains a core curriculum for a contemporary course in the humanities, designed to make humanistic studies meaningful and enjoyable to community college students representative of all levels of ability and motivation and of all ages. The course attempts to sharpen the student's awareness of himself as an individual among other individuals in one of many cultural traditions through units examining the definition of selfhood, direct experience of the fine arts, and consideration of the function and value of art, the idea of history, and of how artistic expression effects society and defines the individual's stance toward it in a given period of history. The syllabi in this document are designed primarily for the teacher and have a two-fold purpose: to provide the teacher with a model of a student-oriented interdisciplinary approach to the humanities that is usable in whole or in part; and to suggest classroom activities, instructional strategies, student assignments and experiences, and audiovisual aids that will enrich and enliven a course of study. Each of the 14 self-contained units is preceded by a brief overview of scope and content, and contains objectives, suggested assignments, an outline of contents, study questions, some discourse on the theme of the unit, and annotated suggestions for additional readings. (JDS)

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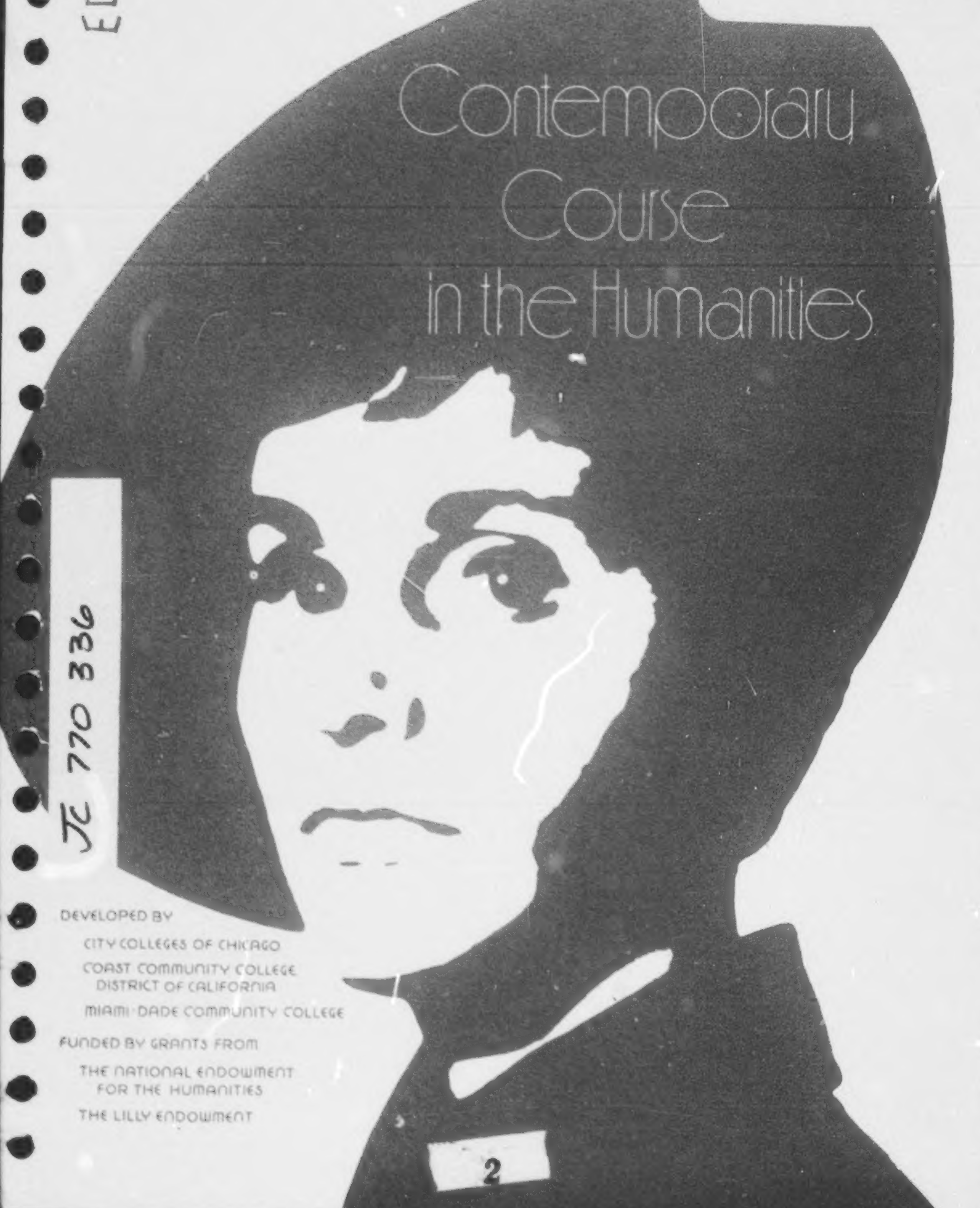
Contemporary Course in the Humanities



JC 770 336

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THE LILLY ENDOWMENT

A CONTEMPORARY COURSE
IN THE HUMANITIES
FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

(NEH Grant ED-10555-74-412)

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James J. Zigerell
Project Director

INTRODUCTION: CORE CURRICULUM FOR A CONTEMPORARY COURSE IN THE HUMANITIES (ED-10555-74-412)

The purpose of any well-designed course of studies in the humanities can best be summed up in a familiar formula: to please and instruct. Indeed, talented teachers of all ages have made the first part of the tag antecedent to the second. Socrates himself could not have shown that learning is a process of remembering unless he had first been able to capture a slaveboy's attention.

One of the major tasks the experienced teachers of Humanities who prepared the "core" curriculum which follows laid out for themselves was to devise ways of capturing and holding the wayward attention of community college students. They did this so that later, like Socrates, they would be in a position to draw out of their students unarticulated awarenesses to be put to use in demonstrating that the unexamined life is not worth living. Many of these students, it must be noted, come to the community college with long histories of vagrant attention.

The project from which has issued the curriculum presented herewith began with a threefold objective. First, the participating faculty set out to make humanistic studies meaningful and enjoyable to community college students ranging in age from sixteen to sixty, representative of all levels of ability and motivation, and, for the most part, espousing a hardheaded pragmatic view of education, a process they see as leading to a job and the "good" things a materialistic society has to offer.

Second, the participants wrestled long and hard with the formidable problem of preparing a blueprint for a common set of humanistic experiences that all members of a large community college student body--regardless of whether their goals be immediate entry into the job market after indefinite stays in the community college or further study in a four-year college--can share with profit.

Finally, recognizing that the community college student body displays even greater disparities of interest--not to mention disparities of background and aptitude--than the undergraduate body of a liberal arts college, they took on the task of devising optional (as opposed to "core") courses of study intended to "apply" the content and methods of the classical humanistic disciplines (history, philosophy, rehetoric, and the fine arts) to areas of study and practical concern that relate directly to the community college student's interests and aspirations. (These "optional" curricula are submitted separately.)

A Core Course

The course of study presented herein is one the teacher-designers think of as a "core" curriculum. If all learning were amenable to precise measurement and if teachers were given to unanimity, the faculty participating in this project might have produced a definitive course in which is embedded the irreducible "core" needed to make Everyman, or the community college Everyman, aware of what it means to be truly "human." But the humanist's lot is not a happy one. He can only take consolation from Walt Whitman who "heard the learn'd astronomer," and was shown the charts and the diagrams--"to add, divide, and measure them." Finally, "tired and sick," he left the lecture hall and "look'd up in perfect silence at the stars."

A hard, irreducible core is not there to be uncovered. The designers of the course, therefore, have tried to hit upon some broad awarenesses and skills that mark man off from the animal and, in the eyes of observers of an earlier age, made him a little lower than the angels. Thus the course is designed to sharpen the student's awareness of himself as an individual living among other individuals in one of many cultural traditions, in a period of history flowing from periods that have gone before--and all in a universe that dwarfs him and his fellows and that may or may not be contingent upon a force that transcends the vastness of the universe itself. By requiring him to read novels, poems, and discursive works that do not daunt his capacities, the developers of this curriculum hope that he will ask of himself what the greatest minds of the ages have asked of themselves. What am I? Does anything lie beyond appearances? Are there things that I ought to do because in themselves they are worth doing? Am I the master of my fate? Do I, and should I, live by bread alone?

Certainly no one of the teachers who developed this course is so innocent as to suppose that hundreds, or even scores, of fellow community college teachers will accept this core in its entirety. They do, however trust that others besides themselves will see certain elements of the course design as useful and attractive to a community college student. They have, therefore, shaped the course as a series of self-contained units, in the hope that many teachers will find a unit or units he can with profit incorporate into his teaching.

This core course has been planned and developed with the profile of the "new" students attending community colleges by the hundreds of thousands firmly in mind. One of the most respected of the investigators of these "new" students, K. Patricia Cross of the Higher Education Center at Berkeley, tells us something about them:

> . . . there is evidence that New Students are more uncomfortable in the traditional academic educational system than are the students for whom present educational experiences were designed. They are more likely than traditional students to feel that the academic pace is too fast for them; they are more likely to feel nervous or shy in the competitive classroom; they are more eager for college assistance with problems related to academic achievement; and they are more interested in counseling help with personal problems.
>
> . . . there is evidence that New Students have some ideas about what they would like schools and colleges to do. They are likely to be attracted to courses and colleges that are seen as practical preparation for vocational futures. The data support a broad generalization that New Students are eager to take on their adult responsibilities. New Students attending community colleges indicate feelings of progress in learning how to get along with people, in learning job-related skills, and in developing a satisfactory philosophy of life.
>
> (Beyond the Open Door, p. 83)

However much humanists may deplore this outlook and decry abandoning or diluting traditional approaches so as to appeal--or pander?--to the tastes of thousands who before World War II would never have thought of education beyond the high school, the fact remains that these new students are present in such numbers that their views must be heeded, callow and shabby though they seem, if only because in most community colleges they have as little as possible to do with the classrooms where the "humanities" are professed.

The core course presented herein is not an attempt to pander to student taste. Rather, if such a thing be possible, it is an attempt at respectable cozenage. Its designers are striving to make humanistic studies not only ends in themselves, but also means to "useful" ends by 1) relating them to practical affairs, and 2) exploiting the interests and knowledge the "new" student brings with him to the classroom. Is this necessarily a betrayal of the ideals of liberal education? John Henry Newman said of liberal education that

> viewed in itself, /it/ is simply the cultivation of the intellect as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence.

Even the most sceptical of the teachers who decide to give the units of this course a chance in their classrooms will discover that built into each unit are honest efforts to inculcate the habits of mind that lead to "excellence" of the kind praised by Newman.

The Approach

The instructional approach represented in this core course revolves about the individual and the quality of his life, his relations with his fellowmen and society, and ultimately his relationship to the cosmos, the transcendent, the divine--or whatever he believes lies beyond what he sees about him. It may appear to some that the mountains are laboring to produce a mouse. But the fact is that these relationships are central to the human condition. The task of the humanist-teacher is to encourage the student to come to terms with himself first. If he is successful, the student will recognize himself as a rational animal, or an animal capable of reason (in Jonathan Swift's view), or (in Cassirer's more contemporary terms) a symbol-making animal. He knows that he must play out a part in society, a part which endows certain of his acts with value. Eventually, too, he confronts the possibility of something--or nothing--beyond himself.

The introductory part of the course is designed to acquaint the student with what purports to be distinctive to the core course; namely, an extensive use of the arts as gateways to humanistic considerations, and an emphasis on the individual's ability to define his own selfhood through the humanities.

Several units focus on the individual or the self. The opening one is intended to encourage the student to examine his own life and face up to himself as a self-conscious, thinking individual living in a world in which he must exercise moral choice, make decisions, and establish a hierarchy of values.

Succeeding units plunge him into direct experience of the fine arts: literary, visual, and musical. The objective? To try to prove to the often sceptical student that the arts, in Berenson's phrase, are indeed life-enchancing.

Units 6 and 7 have as their purpose getting the student to reflect on the function and value of art and artistic expression in his own life and in the life of 20th-century America. They are a bridge to a series of units on the individual vis-a-vis his fellowman--the individual and society. Running through following units -- forming a motif, so to speak -- is a peculiarly human relationship between individuals which has great social implications: love -- the faces and the myths of love as we know them from the Symposium down through the Western tradition. De Rougemont, who in his Love in the Western World analyzes exhaustively one of the great European love myths, Tristan and Iseult, provides us with a suggestive definition of myth: "a story -- a symbolical fable as simple as it is striking -- which sums up an infinite number of more or less analogous situations." The mythos of love will be traced in the works of art, music and literature it has inspired as well as in its social effects, desirable and undesirable.

Through a series of carefully selected reading and activities, another unit introduces the student to the idea of history and the way history is written. The unit is designed to present history as something quite distinct from and -- as an art -- superior to the news columns of a daily newspaper or the letters and diaries that describe people and periods -- the materials of history.

The closing units are intended to demonstrate how artistic expression both effects changes in human society and defines an individual's stance toward society and its values during a given period of history. The student's attention will be directed to the current manipulation of human choice through artful uses of the popular entertainment media. Attention will also be paid to the artistic expressions that cultural historians identify as distinctive of periods.

Teaching Method

These units are so designed as to suggest a method, or teaching strategy, to teachers adopting them. First each unit moves from what is familiar and immediately acceptable to the student to what is unfamiliar and even impenetrable at first blush. Therefore, there are numerous references to the popular arts and the popular culture, the rhetoric of advertising, the popular wisdom and philosophy as found in the advice columns. But the purpose is not to delude the student into believing that watching a TV situation comedy and reading Moliere's The Misanthrope constitute experiences of equal value, or result in insights into the human condition equally acute. True, some popular arts deserve study for their own sake--as the mythos of the Western tells us something about the American as he confronts the conflict between the forces of light and darkness. Rather, the popular arts can become stepping stones to the enjoyment of fiction or serious works of art that cast some light on the human condition. Conceivably, given an ingenious teacher, a reading of a Western novel or the viewing of a Western movie might spark the student to a reading of Henry James's The American. An alert teacher will use a newspaper column or letter to a newspaper demanding greater freedom for women to motivate a reading of Antigone, A Doll's House, or Candida.

In addition, an examination of the units will make it apparent that each is two-leveled, so to speak. First, there is the "content" level. The student, let us say, is nudged into reflecting on an aspect of the human relationship we call love that has perplexed people of all ages. His reflection is prompted by a reading of Joyce's The Dead, Flaubert's Madame Bovary, Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, a short lyric by Christina Rossetti or Emily Dickinson. Or he looks at works of art that idealize the human form or human relationships. Or he listens to a piece of music for which there is a printed program. To do these things, however, he must have skills--skills of analysis. Reading, looking, and listening represent the second level. The student must acquire the "elements" of appreciation and learn to identify formal qualities. Just as he immunizes himself against the advertiser's siren song when he becomes aware of the manipulative effect of the TV commercial's rhetoric, so too he reads with relish the *Gettysburg Address* or Pericles' *Funeral Oration*, once he recognizes the formal qualities the accomplished rhetorician gives his work. This practice in analysis is an integral part of every unit. It is the student's training in the language of the humanities.

Use of the Units

The teachers who worked together in preparing these units for a "Contemporary Curriculum in the Humanities for Community College Students" are well aware that most college teachers of the Humanities are specialists in one area or another. Not only that, they are individualists. These units, developed by nine teachers from three large community colleges with differing histories and differing clientele, are designed to be adaptable to a variety of institutions and teaching situations. Further, the units have been cast in an interdisciplinary form so that the fine arts, rhetoric, philosophy and history are employed jointly in viewing a human predicament or characterizing an age.

As indicated earlier, this core course can be adopted as a whole--which would flatter its developers--or used in part. What is important is that the course in its entirety and the units of it are scenarios that the teacher fleshes out with his own materials and own emphases. Looked at another way, the proposed course represents a series of teaching strategies. A teacher can accept the strategy without accepting the suggested readings or activities. Needless to say, a wide range of reading, looking, and listening activities can be adapted to the unit. Each teacher has tested plays, poems, novels, paintings in the heat of the classroom. He has his own favorites. Each teacher, too, once prolonged exposure to the community college classroom has dissipated the euphoria of the graduate seminar, learns that he must make a down-to-earth assessment of the rows of students stretched out before him. Above all, he has to be flexible.

The approach suggested in this course is a flexible one.

Faculty Growth

Finally, a word must be said about the unparalleled opportunity this project has provided and is providing for exchanges of ideas among experienced faculties from widely dispersed community colleges. Each of the participants--as well as the consultants who sat with them at the curriculum conferences--have had long-held views and cherished approaches confirmed or seriously challenged. The process has been as valuable a faculty in-service training program as can be imagined. Every participant will return to his campus better for having had the experience.

Note to Teachers

The courses of study which follow, supported by a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (ED-10555-74-412), were, as indicated in the Introduction above, produced by a team of instructors from three of the country's largest multi-campus community colleges: City Colleges of Chicago, Coast Community College of Orange Coast, and Miami-Dade Community College. The many thousands of students enrolled on the campuses of these colleges run the socio-economic gamut. Large numbers come from economically and/or culturally impoverished homes, as well as from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. They range in age from 16 to 60, tilting toward the upper end of the range as more and more older adults turn to the community college for educational opportunity.

All this is offered by way of establishing the credentials of the instructors involved. They know from experience that the community college student body is a coat of divers colors, and neither underestimate nor overestimate the capacities of the students they teach.

They are also aware that many teachers of the humanities in community colleges prefer to teach exclusively in their areas of specialization--art, music, English. Some of them, as a matter of fact, taught only rather narrow specialties before they started work in this project. They are now persuaded, however, that any community college teacher of the humanities can become "generalist" enough to present on his or her own the core and optional courses outlined below. Above all, they share the conviction that, given the community college student's minimal exposure to the humanities, an interdisciplinary course is the most promising means of enabling the student to bring a "humanistic" focus to matters of living and making a living.

It should also be noted that those connected with this project--director, coordinator, faculty, consultants--did not flatter themselves that they were producing something new under the sun. Inter- and cross- disciplinary courses have been around for a long time, alternately flourishing and languishing. They now seem to be due for a comeback. The project participants felt simply that the general interdisciplinary kind of course exploits an economy of means and is easily adaptable to strategies and approaches that appeal to community college students.

The syllabi that follow are designed primarily for the teacher. The purpose is two-fold: 1) to provide the teacher with a model of a student-oriented interdisciplinary approach [illegible]he humanities that is usable as a whole or in part; 2) to suggest classroom activities, instructional strategies, student assignments and experiences, and audiovisual aids that will enrich and enliven a course of study.

It should be noted that the instructors who developed the units of the general core course that fill most of the pages which follow did not intend to prescribe the readings, the works of art, or the musical compositions to be studied and analyzed by students. The works referred to in the units -- familiar to teachers of courses in the general humanities -- are employed as models that illustrate the problems of self under discussion. Or they are used for purposes of sample analysis. Any instructor adopting these units may very well have his or her own favorite stories, essays, and paintings. Thus a teacher may argue that the short stories of Ernest Hemingway in which the young Nick Adams explores problems of self and identity are preferable and more accessible to his students than Notes from Underground. This is a matter of little moment. What the teachers who developed the curriculum want to emphasize is an overall approach.

Finally, it must be pointed out at the beginning that the instructional team elected to base the units primarily on two of the classical humanistic disciplines: the fine arts and philosophy. History -- or the art of history -- does get some attention. Rhetoric as such is slighted, except for 1) occasional references to contemporary manifestations of the art of persuasion as seen in advertising, and 2) notice of rhetorical forms in so far as recognition of such forms leads to sharpened appreciation of literary works.

Teachers from each of the participating colleges were responsible for certain of the units. Each of the colleges was also responsible for developing one of the optional courses.

Project participants and some of their colleagues are now trying out materials in the classroom.

The National Endowment for the Humanities also authorized the project institutions to purchase audiovisual materials to strengthen units of the core course. The materials selected and the units they accompany are listed in the next section.

The participating colleges developed on their own brief videotaped programs designed to introduce students to each of the core units. These programs are not intended to provide information or background. Rather, they are to "tease" or stimulate interest.

Each college produced a videotape for each of the units its faculty team developed. Videocassette copies of these programs will be available shortly for purchase or rental from the Great Plains Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501.

During the first year of the project, the efforts of the instructional team were ably coordinated by Dr. Ralph Smith, Professor of Aesthetic Education at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Professor Smith also undertook the formidable task of reducing the units to a manageable format.

The project staff and participating faculty are as follows:

James J. Zigerell, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Professor of English, City Colleges of Chicago, Director;

Franklin G. Bouwsma, Vice President for Instructional Services, Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, Florida;

Thomas Gripp, Director of Programing and Professor of English, Coast Community Colleges, Costa Mesa, California;

David Giltrow, Dean of Educational Services, City Colleges of Chicago, Audiovisual Coordinator;

Ann Taylor, Olive-Harvey College of the City Colleges of Chicago, faculty participant, first year;

Edmund Dehnert, Mayfair College of the City Colleges of Chicago, faculty participant, first and second years;

James Quinn, Loop College of the City Colleges of Chicago, faculty participant, first and second years;

Dwight Jack, South Campus, Miami-Dade Community College, first year;

Ilse Earl, South Campus, Miami-Dade Community College, first year;

Marcia Murray, North Campus, Miami-Dade Community College, first and second years;

Richard Janaro, Miami-Dade Community College, second year;

Allen Giles, Golden West College of Coast Community Colleges, first year;

Eleanor Katz, Orange Coast College of Coast Community Colleges, first and second years;

Bruce Piner, Orange Coast Colleges of Coast Community Colleges, first year;

Charles Whitchurch, Golden West College of Coast Community Colleges, second year.

The following served as consultants to the project. Since most of them hold university teaching posts, their presence at one or more of the three curriculum meetings held during the first year allowed for lively exchanges with the community college participants. It is not often that community college teachers, whose teaching loads are heavy, have a chance to swap ideas and experiences with research-minded colleagues in the universities:

Eva Frayne, Parkland Community College, Illinois
Howard A. Berry, Rockland Community College, New York
John Cawelti, University of Chicago
Albert William Levi, Washington University, St. Louis
James L. Jarrett, University of California at Berkeley
George Linden, Southern Illinois University
Walter Clark, Jr., University of Michigan
Rupert Evans, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Daniel Horowitz, Scripps College
Robert Wohl, UCLA
Mary Stevens, Brown University
John Orr, University of Southern California
Phillip Nash, Monterey Peninsula College, California
[illegible] Brackett, Norwalk Community College, Connecticut
Barbara Bundy, Dominican College, Berkeley, California

Certainly all concerned with the project express gratitude to the National Endowment for the Humanities whose generous support made all this possible. Ms. Susan Cole and Ms. Floy Brown, NEH Program officers, were helpful and understanding. The best expression of gratitude to the Endowment, however, will come from adoption of the curriculum materials produced not only by teachers in the participating colleges but also by teachers in colleges that did not participate. Solid assurance that the curriculum will reach large audiences will come through a television course the City Colleges of Chicago and Coast Community College District are now producing jointly (1976-77). Telecourse content will be based on the units of the syllabus which follows. The course will be broadcast on open television in Southern California and Chicago in 1978 and will be available on a lease basis by other institutions.

AUDIOVISUAL GUIDE

As indicated earlier, one of the premises on which this curriculum is based is that a contemporary course in the humanities, if it is to be contemporary, must employ audiovisual materials extensively to attract and hold the attention of community college students. The National Endowment for the Humanities was generous enough to approve purchase by the participating institutions of a number of films, slides, and sound recordings to accompany units of the course.

Listed below are the audiovisual materials recommended for purchase by the project faculty. The list is the product of a lot of viewing and browsing in the catalogs. Art slides are not included for the simple reason that inclusion of them one by one would have swollen the list inordinately. Further, teachers in non-participating colleges adopting the curriculum, or parts, thereof will want to reserve considerable leeway in selecting the works of art to be studied in or out of the classroom.

Ordering audiovisual materials can be a discouraging enterprise since distribution is often effected on a regional basis. It is usually wise to check catalogs of a/v holdings published by universities which serve as regional repositories -- the University of Illinois in Urbana, for example.

These catalogs identify producers and distributors.

This sampling of available materials should not be construed as the course's basic audiovisual list but rather as representing faculty members' suggestions to strengthen their own college's existing film collections. Other suggestions are presented at the end of the units. Films indicated throughout the curriculum emphasize those which can be shown in a single class period and still permit time for discussion following the screening.

The two or three letter code following the titles indicates the name of the film's commercial distributor. These distributors are given following the film list and can provide information about purchase price.

UNIT I

Conformity 8 mins. BFA

This film explores through animation without narration the idea that people live their lives in a repetitious pattern which may be the basis for fighting and war.

I Who Am, Who Am I (Edited From The Swimmer) 17 mins. LCA

John Cheever's short story, The Swimmer, was adapted for the screen and stars Burt Lancaster. In this excerpt, the suburbanite who has lost the external symbols of his life struggles to regain his identity.

The Incident 8 mins. PHX

An animated tale of a suicidal person about to jump with vendors and TV commentators on the scene.

1999 A. D. 22 mins. FOR

A film sponsored by the Ford Motor Company about what life might be like in the year 1999 by going through the day in the life of an American family. Emphasis on what technology can provide in the way of comforts and convenience.

Omowale-The Child Returns Home
30 mins. B&W IU

John Williams travels to Africa to explore his ancestral roots and the present relationship between Afro-Americans and Africans.

Plato's Cave 20 mins. PYR

Plato's parable about the fate of Socrates is the subject of this film adaptation from Book VII of Plato's "The Republic".

Rhinoceros 11 mins. McH

A concisely presented animated version of Ionesco's play about conformity.

UNIT II

Autumn: Frost Country 9 mins. BFA

Robert Frost reads his poems "The Road Not Taken" and "Reluctance" as the camera explores a New England autumn.

E.E. Cummings 30 mins. FH

A documentary film about the poet's many talents including his visual as well as poetic explorations.

The Greek Myths, Parts 1 and 2
27 mins. EBE

Part 1 covers the myth as source of literature, art, history, and music. Examples from the Minotaur, Orpheus and Eurydice and others illustrate the ideas presented. Part 2 treats science, religion and drama and ends with a final scene from Aeschylus's Prometheus in Chains.

Koestler on Creativity 40 mins.
TLM

A filmed exploration of the ideas of Arthur Koestler based on his book, The Act of Creation. An integrated view of creativity from perspectives of science and the arts.

The Lady of Shalott 10 mins. EBE

Tennyson's poem is visually rendered through a noted British artist, C. Walter Hodges, and appears in abridged form designed to encourage students to read the complete poem.

Language of Advertising 29 mins.
B&W IU

The techniques of advertising's use of words to sell and promote are analyzed. The dangers and problems with "Serantic Crimes" are brought out by appropriate examples.

Thai Images of the Buddha 14 mins.
IU

With images from the arts of Thailand touring exhibition, the film documents the portrayal of the Buddha Image in Thailand.

UNIT III

American Time Capsule, 1975 3 mins.
PYR

A frantic-paced chronological capsule of 200 years of America using photographs and prints from the Revolutionary War to President Ford's administration.

The Art of Film: Screenwriting
20 mins. PER

Excerpts from Oliver Twist, Metropolis, The 400 Blows, Pygmalion, and Caesar and Cleopatra provide a broad sweep of the critical role played by the screenwriter in developing a motion picture. Rod Serling narrates.

Art of the Film: The Camera
20 mins. PER

Photographic techniques used in filmmaking are illustrated with examples from Beauty and the Beast, The Lady Vanishes, The Silence, and other noted feature films.

The Art of the Film: Performance
20 mins. PER

Olivier in Richard III, Hepburn in Summertime, Chaplin in The Gold Rush, and Quinn and Masina in La Strada provide masterful examples of the various styles of film acting.

The Art of Film: Music and Sound
21 mins. PER

Often providing unconscious feelings of dimension and richness, the music/audio portion of a film is one of the least acclaimed parts of the cinema. Examples of how sound serves the film's overall purpose is illustrated by scenes from Wild Strawberries, Alexander Nevsky, M, and others.

The Art of the Film: The Edited Image 21 mins. PER

Using excerpts from Potemkin, Olympia, and Citizen Kane (among others), Rod Serling points out the physical and artistic qualities of film editing.

The Art of the Film: The Director 23 mins. PER

The director unifies the different components of the motion picture according to his vision of the final cut. Hitchcock, Truffaut, Kurosawa, and Bergman are represented in various film examples including The 39 Steps, Jules and Jim, Rashomon, The Seventh Seal, and others.

Battleship Potemkin 68 mins. B&W BHK

Classic Russian film by S. Eisenstein is a monument to precise direction, editing, and use of the film for emotive purposes.

D.W. Griffith in Perspective 10 mins. PYR

Short (one reeler), silent film from a series of 50 films now available by one of America's most outstanding pioneer filmmakers.

The Film Makers: King Vidor 28 mins. B&W IU

Hollywood director, King Vidor, talks about his experiences in silent film days and early talkies with examples and a personal tour of Hollywood's old landmarks.

The First Twenty Years. Part 2: 1903-04 Edwin S. Porter--Dramas 29 mins. PYR

Using early footage from the U.S. Copyright Office, this film illustrates one of the early filming pioneers treatment of drama. Musical accompaniment in the original style of early movie houses.

The First Twenty Years. Part 16: 1909 D.W. Griffith--Three Dramas 26 mins. PYR

Early explorations by one of America's first outstanding filmmakers. Based on collection of the U.S. Copyright Office.

The First Twenty Years. Part 22: 1903-04 France--George Melies 29 mins. PYR

An early experimenter with what the cinema could do, George Melies became known throughout the world for his imaginative use of the camera for entertaining a public new to motion pictures.

Frank Film 9 mins. PYR

An autobiography of a filmmaker as created on film. It is also a commentary on the life style of Americans and their dependence on material rewards.

The Further Adventures of Uncle Sam 13 mins. PYR

An animated film about modern American life as told through the allegory of many motion pictures where Bad abducts Good who is saved by his friend and they then rescue Purity and defeat the Bads.

Occurence At Owl Creek Bridge
27 mins. B&W McH

Academy Award winning adaption of Ambrose Bierce's story of a Civil War prisioner about to die by hanging. The manipulation of time and space as a unique film quality is exploited with great impact.

Un Chien Andalou 16 mins. B&W PYR

A film by Salvador Dali and Bunuel made in 1929 and billed as the "avante-garde film" of all time.

UNIT IV

Ansel Adams--Photographer 20 mins. B&W IFB

Best known for his photographs of landscapes and nature, Adams was an all around artist with deeply felt views about life and humanism. This film shows him at work and how he translates his philosophy into photography.

Artists: A series examining individual artists and their work.
30 mins. each B&W IU

Included are:

- Barnett Newman
- Jack Tworkov
- Jasper Johns
- Jim Dines
- Robert Rauschenbert
- Morris Lewis and Kenneth Noland
- Richard Lippold

Arts and Crafts in West Africa
11 mins. BFA

Artisans in West African villages use materials at hand to meet practical and cermonial needs for their crafts which often stress Islamic geometric designs.

Closed Mondays 8 mins. PYR

A man wanders off the street into a closed art museum and discovers some of the attributes of art in startling ways. A 1975 Oscar winner using clay figures and animation.

A Creation: The Artist at Work
12 mins. BFA

Without narration, this film follows Hungarian Glass Designer, Erzsebet Szabo, as she creates a large glass vase from initial idea on paper to the final form.

Discovering Composition in Art
16 mins. BFA

Fundamentals of composition are illustrated including center of interest, balance, lines suggesting movement, and use of space.

Discovering Creative Pattern
17 mins. BFA

Pattern as visual organization is illustrated in nature and then as used by the artist in a variety of ways--weaving, painting, architecture, etc.

Discovering Dark and Light
18 mins. BFA

Artists control the variation in dark and light to evoke various feelings--indeed, this variation is called "value". The film summarizes some of the ways value is used by artists.

Discovering Form in Art 21 mins.
BFA

The five basic forms of sphere, cube, cone, cylinder, and pyramid are the basis for endless shapes and forms used by artists to achieve desired effects.

Discovering Ideas for Art 16 mins.
BFA

Ideas come from observation and stimulate the inventions of artists through a variety of ways.

Discovering Perspective 14 mins.
BFA

Overlapping, vertical position, varying size and detail, as well as the classic convergence of lines provide a sense of depth and distance to artists' paintings and drawings.

Homage to Rodin 19 mins. PYR

A filmed summary of Rodin's work using the collection of the B.G. Cantor Art Foundation.

Language of the Camera Eye
29 mins. B&W IU

Photographer Ansel Adams and Photography Historian Beaumont Newhall analyze the photographs of Weston, Cartier-Bresson, Steichen, Stieglitz and others. Adams explains his own philosophy and development of his ideas of photo-poetry.

Painting: A Visual Record 18 mins.
McH

The film examines the sweep of painting styles over the centuries and cultures to illustrate how the artist reacts to personal and social forces through the techniques of painting.

Photography as an Art 29 mins.
B&W IU

Ansel Adams is shown in the Yosemite National Park photographing the natural world for which he is most noted. He comments on his work and life as photographer, teacher and artist.

Poster 16 mins. BFA

The various types of posters are explored and analyzed for their purposes and uses--billboards, political posters, stamps, and the television commercial as a "moving poster".

The Searching Eye 12 mins. PYR

The creative camera of Saul Bass reveals the macro and micro world around us. An outstanding film from the 1964 New York World's Fair.

Who is Victor Vasarely? 30 mins. IU

Considered to be the founder of "Op-Art", Hungarian Bord Vasarely explains his views on art and his broad experiments with light and geometry.

The Wyeth Phenomenon 25 mins. BFA

Andrew Wyeth's paintings and the reaction to them by critics and the public are explored in this film which also includes interviews with family and tour of the family home at Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania.

UNIT V

The Bolero 27 mins. PYR

Well-constructed film of Ravel's masterpiece as played by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. 1974 Oscar winner.

The Symphony Sound 26 mins. LCA

The unique sounds of a symphony orchestra are discussed by conductor Henry Lewis, and then heard in performances and excerpts from DeBussy's *Afternoon of a Faun* and Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*.

UNIT VI

Concrete Poetry 12 mins. PYR

Nine poems from Emmett Williams' *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* are seen as they use typographical composition to suggest tne theme of the poem.

The Electric Flag 12 mins. PYR

This film deals with the role television and filmmaking play in electing political candidates to office. It is based on the filmin of "The Candidate" with Robert Redford.

UNIT VII

60 Second Spot 26 mins. PYR

Well-constructed film about making a film to sell a soft drink illustrates the planning and effort which goes into a national television commercial.

UNIT VIII

The Parting 16 mins. WOM

A documentary on death as a part of life in a remote European village.

UNIT IX

Act Without Words 10 mins. PYR

Samuel Beckett's short mime examines the darker implication of the human condition in this animated film adaptation.

Bartleby 28 mins. EBE

Melville's story of the enigmatic scrivener who "preferred not to" is adapted for the screen with faithful attention to locale and period.

A Matter of Indifference (Old Age) 50 mins. B&W PHX

An investigative documentary on the psycho-social, physical, and emotional problems of aging.

The Other Side 10 mins. PYR

Impersonal violence and the effects of conformity are the subjects of this grim parable from Europe.

The Trendsetter 6 mins. PYR

From England, this film is an animated look at the human condition from Biographic Films cartoon studios.

UNIT X

Earth People: Caretaker of the Planet 54 mins. PHX

Discussion of the dangers of industrial pollution by world leaders.

Harmony of Man and Nature 12 mins. BFA

This outstanding film seeks to show how we can survive in a world increasingly paved over and "developed" by appreciating the majesty and awe of nature. Produced by the State of Washington for the 1970 Expo in Osaka, Japan.

John Muir's High Sierra 27 mins. PYR

Muir's writings are complemented by sensitive photography of his walks through the High Sierra range in California.

Les Mistons 18 mins. PYR

Francois Truffaut's first film deals with pre-teen concerns of sex and death as they grow up in a small French town.

The Tragedy of the Commons 23 mins. BFA

A film about the clash between personal values and the distribution of limited resources using the historical context of the common pasture lands.

UNIT XI

The Ancient Africans 27 mins. IFF

A survey film about early African civilizations using both animation and live photography to convey a sense of the diversity and sophistication of earlier times on a continent often misunderstood.

The First Americans--and Their Gods 11 mins. IFF

The film gives a brief, animated look at an unknown facet of American history: the effect of the nature-gods as powerful forces on the lives of Native Americans.

The American Vision 36 mins. EBE

America's history is reflected in the work of her artists over the past two hundred years in this film produced by the National Gallery of Art.

Figures 14 mins. FI

An examination of how artists portray the human body with illustrations of the great variety of styles and interpretations through history and across cultures.

Civilization Series: Grandeur and Obedience 52 mins. TLM

Kenneth Clark's analysis of the Counter-Reformation and early Baroque periods with many examples of the art of these times.

Civilization Series: Man--The Measure of All Things 52 mins. TLM

Kenneth Clark's examination of Italy in the 15th Century when Florence was at the peak of artistic creation--painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Michelangelo, the Last Giant
67 mins. McH

The story of Michelangelo is told through his paintings, sculpture, and architecture together with his own words and those of his biographers. Peter Ustinov appears as the artist; Jose Ferrer narrates.

UNIT XIII

Discovering the Music of Africa
22 mins. BFA

Emphasis is placed on the drum and other percussive instruments in African music. This film describes the complexities of African rhythms as played by a noted Ghannian drummer.

Discovering the Music of India
22 mins. BFA

The complex, highly developed music of India is illustrated with a variety of instruments. Music and dance are closely related in India and some of the basic principles are explained.

Discovering American Indian Music
24 mins. BFA

Social and ceremonial functions of American Indian music are illustrated with songs and dances from various parts of the country.

Discovering the Music of Latin America 20 mins. BFA

The blending of many Latin American traditions has resulted in unique musical styles which have influenced our own music. Some of these styles are discussed and illustrated in this film which includes Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos.

Opera: Man, Music, and Drama
18 mins. McH

A sampling of various operas including Orfeo, Cosi Fan Tutte, Rigoletto, La Boheme, and arias from Die Meistersinger and Carmen.

UNIT XIV

Ballad Without End 12 mins. PHX

Depicts the senseless dying of two young soldiers during the Civil War who have rejected war to the joy of life.

Breaking Out of the Doll's House
32 mins. LCA

Joseph Losey's film version of Ibsen's classic A Doll's House stars Jane Fonda. In this excerpted version, husband and wife confront each other which suddenly reveals their true relationship.

The Lottery 18 mins. EBE

Powerful rendering on the film of Shirley Jackson's short story.

Oedipus Rex, Man and God 90 mins.
McH

Sophocles' drama is rendered by the Stratford (Ont.) Shakespearian Festival Players; directed by Tyrone Guthrie using an austere platform-stage with larger-than-life masks in the classical Greek manner.

DISTRIBUTORS FOR THE PRECEDING FILMS

BFA

BFA Educational Media
2211 Michigan Avenue
Santa Monica, CA 90406

EBE

Encyclopedia Britannica
Educational Corp.
425 North Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60611

FH

Films For The Humanities
Box 2053
Princeton, NJ 08540

FI

Films, Inc.
1144 Wilmette Ave.
Wilmette, IL 60091

FOR

Ford Film Library
Ford Motor Company
American Road
Dearborn, MI 48121

IFB

International Film Bureau
332 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60604

IFF

International Film Foundation
475 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10017

IU

Indiana University
Audio-Visual Center
Bloomington, IN 47401

LCA

Learning Corporation Of America
1350 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019

McH

McGraw-Hill Films
Dept. BF
1221 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

PHX

Phoenix Films
470 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

PER

Perspective Films
65 E. South Water Street
Chicago, IL 60601

PYR

Pyramid Films
Box 1048
Santa Monica, CA 90406

TLM

Time-Life Multimedia Division
Time and Life Building
New York, NY 10020

WOM

Wombat Productions
77 Tannytown Road
White Plains, NY 10607

KNOWING YOUR WAY AROUND YOURSELF--AN INTRODUCTION TO UNIT I

After he had reached the age of 65, Ralph Waldo Emerson entered the following in his Journal:

> A man never gets acquainted with himself, but is always a surprise. We get daily news of the world within, as well as of the world outside, and not less of the central than of the surface facts. A new thought is awaiting him every morning.

No matter how well we think we know ourselves, our essential selfhood retains an air of mystery and remains a continent not fully explored.

Yet few would dispute that each of us knows himself better than he knows other aspects of the environment. Ironically, however, once we begin to try to express our inner feelings, we are uncertain as to what significance or interpretation to attach to our experiences--indeed, in some instances, we are in doubt as to the very nature of these experiences. In a period of history characterized by the standardization and mass production of things and events, it is especially important that we establish ourselves as individuals rather than as faceless citizens and consumers.

What is it to be a person, a member of an endangered species-- an individual? One way of coming to know ourselves is by performing thoughtful and searching inventories of our own experiences. A good way for a teacher to embark on a unit of study on the self which relates the self to the humanities is to ask students to respond to questions like the following. To avoid embarrassment, the student can complete the questionnaire anonymously and turn it in to the teacher to form a basis for class discussion. A sample questionnaire follows.

An Inventory of Experience

1. What sorts of goals do you see as particularly important to you? The achievement of which goals would afford you the greatest happiness?
2. How do you determine the importance you place on a desired objective? By the material rewards it will bring you? By the "psychic income" and personal satisfaction it will bring?
3. Have you ever sized up your limitations as a person? Do some of the goals you have set for yourself in life seem unrealistic in view of recognized limitations?
4. Can you see yourself as ever wanting to be successful at any cost--that is, short of breaking the law?
5. Do you have difficulty deciding what is really a valuable objective?
6. How would you like others to see you? Once you are old and gray and ready to leave this earthly plane, what would you like people to remember you for? What would you like as an epitaph on your tombstone?
7. What aspects of your personality do you think others see as admirable? Do your friends consider you a generally effective individual? Are you good in problem-solving situations?
8. What qualities do you most admire in others whom you have come to trust and value?
9. How do you suppose you arrived at your notions of what is good, admirable, worthy of emulation. From your family? School? Association with others? Church?
10. Do you think any of the "values" you have inherited--e.g., what is good? what is the meaning and purpose of life?--are out of date and ready to be discarded? If so, which ones?
11. Do you believe that notions of good and bad are unchangeable?
12. Name a figure or figures, living or dead, of this century or of other periods of history, who inspired you. Why?
13. Has the example of anyone ever caused you to change your life or your outlook on the meaning of life? If so, who?

14. Can you name a figure in public life, in the entertainment world, or in the artistic world whom you admire and would like to emulate? Why do you admire him or her?

15. Has a motion picture, a TV program, a play or a book ever changed your attitude toward a group of people--an ethnic or religious group, say? If so, name the film or book. Why did it move you?

16. Are you aware of a mysterious force or forces in life?

NOW TURN TO THE BODY OF UNIT I: THE QUEST FOR SELF

PART ONE: THE SELF AND THE HUMANITIES

I. THE QUEST FOR SELF: LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

...progressive deterioration of accurate knowledge of the self and of the right relation between the self and culture constitutes...a crisis in our culture.

Lionel Trilling

One of the most persistent trends in modern philosophy since Descartes and perhaps its most original contribution to philosophy has been an exclusive concern with the self, as distinguished from the soul or person or man in general, an attempt to reduce all experiences, with the world as well as with other human beings, to experiences between man and himself.

Hannah Arendt

I have said that the soul is not more than the body, and
I have said that the body is not more than the soul, and
nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is....

Walt Whitman

I. THE QUEST FOR SELF: LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Overview

After a discussion of the students' own personal experiences and the barriers they perceive to be standing in the way of self-realization, the unit proceeds to a discussion of the quest for self as exemplified in literature. Three major literary works are used for the sake of the analysis: Fyodor Dostoevsky's Notes from Underground, Ralph Ellison's The Invisible Man, and John Stuart Mill's Autobiography. Mill's Autobiography, by stressing that the habit of analysis must be complemented by the habit of poetry, provides a transition to Section Two, "Cultivating the Self Through Critical Awareness," the principal assumption of which is that before the presentations and possibilities of self in the humanities can be meaningfully grasped, relevant critical skills must first be fashioned. (A teacher, however, may choose to assign other and shorter works, literary or popular, to show how the search for self is a major concern in contemporary life.)

Objectives

1. To suggest to students that while one path to self-knowledge lies in performing a thoughtful and searching inventory of one's own experiences, self-knowledge is also closely associated with active exploration of a variety of relationships with other persons and events.

2. To point out that central to the process of self-discovery is the making of choices which convey one's preferences, tastes, and standards of behavior and expression.

3. To explore quests for self in contemporary society.

4. To present an analysis of the structure and dynamics of the self.

5. To examine the quest for self in works of literature or philosophy.

Suggested Reading Assignments

1. Ralph Ellison, "Prologue," The Invisible Man.
2. Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Part I," Notes from Underground.
3. John Stuart Mill, "A Crisis in My Mental History: One Stage Onward," Autobiography of John Stuart Mill.

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Outline of Contents

A. Introduction: The Quest for Self -- Literary and Philosophical Perspectives
B. Suggestions for Teaching
C. Alternative Strategies
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions
F. Appendices:
    1. Descartes on the Self
    2. Hume on the Self
    3. Sartre on the Self

A. Introduction: The Quest for Self -- Literary and Philosophical Perspectives

One key aspect in the discovery of self is the recognition of our capacity for making choices. Not only do we realize that the significance of any situation depends to a great extent on the value we are able to confer on it, but also our own sense of self-worth is established through these choices. As modern existentialist philosophers tell us, it is through choices that we affirm our existence in the world and convey our preferences, tastes, and standards of behavior and expression--the complex process which engenders intellectual, moral, and aesthetic judgments.

Our thoughts and emotions will change according to our perspective on the situation with which we are dealing, the stress we are under, the role we are playing. Hence, those decisions through which we express our identity in a given situation will never be exactly the same. Is this person then the *same* individual that he was in a previous situation, such that we might say his personality consists of continuous and somewhat predictable responses, or is he substantially different in each situation? If the latter, is it then possible to argue we have no unified sense of our identity apart from specific commitments to different situations? Are we then no more than the multiple roles we assume in diverse circumstances?

The prospect of complete autonomy, and thus utter responsibility, for the direction and quality of one's life can contribute to a condition of self-doubt so pervasive as to render the individual incapable of decision, not for lack of energy and intelligence, but rather for absence of firm resolve to bring order to the intellect and sensibilities. Some authors--Dostoevsky notably--have thus expressed serious reservations about the consequences of complete freedom. Reason, logic, and analysis, the customary tools of investigation, are curiously ineffective and often get in the way of insight into the emotions which shape the dilemma of self-examination. No reasoned explanation can necessarily guarantee commitment on a question of moral concern. In the end, the thoroughness of any inquiry must be sacrificed, at least temporarily, if the individual is to express his attitudes on the available information. The individual has no real sense of self other than through the choices with which he is identified. If he fails to act upon his choices, he will persistently be forced "underground" into a self-imposed exile from the realm of action.

In this unit we shall seek out some literary and philosophical perspectives on the self, beginning first with a discussion of the students' own views of themselves and the problems of self-realization, then moving on to a discussion of the quest for self in contemporary society, and finally looking at expressions of the quest in serious fiction. For the sake of discussion in this syllabus, we shall refer to works by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Ralph Ellison, and the philosopher John Stuart Mill. To round out the philosophical perspective, the Appendix contains further references to the ideas of Descartes, Hume, and Sartre. As indicated in the overview, however, a teacher may decide that these works are too formidable for his students and may want to use a less difficult reading or several short selections. For example, one might do worse than assign Hemingway's story "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place". It is brief and simply written but contains a powerful statement on the meaning--or meaningless--of human existence. The sample questionnaire, or one like it, might very well be distributed to students during the first hour of the unit to provide a jumping off point for an investigation of self from the humanistic point of view.

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B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

The topic of one session might very well center on the students' own sense of self. Their own goals and objectives, sources of self, and the barriers they perceive to be blocking the attainment of their goals. For this purpose, the answers given to the questionnaire in the introduction to this unit will be useful in stimulating discussion. After all, most people like to talk about themselves.

It is difficult to predict what will surface during a class discussion of an "Inventory of Experiences." The purpose of these trial materials is to discover such things. It would be consistent with the instructional strategy of this course, however, to introduce as the next topic the way people seek to realize themselves in contemporary "life styles" as these styles can be identified in formal studies or the popular arts: the motion picture, the lyrics of popular songs, etc.

Short, edited versions of major feature films, available in a series entitled Searching for Values, dramatize the self in different kinds of situations. After a discussion of the "Inventory of Experiences," the teacher may want to wind up the session by showing an abbreviated version of Five Easy Pieces (17 minutes). There probably will not be enough time for a detailed analysis of the film, but students can be encouraged to think about the ways the various persons in the film especially its major protagonist, manifest, or fail to manifest, a sense of self. (This film, however, is likely to hold little appeal for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, whose problems of selfhood revolve about economic survival and social acceptance rather than the shallowness of middle-class ways of life).

The following is a description of the film, which when it appeared in movie houses won the acclaim of both young audiences and serious critics:

Loneliness...and Loving (Searching for Values)

Theme: The search for fulfilling human relationships and love. A young man, estranged from his family, returns home to face emotions and conflicts he has chosen to keep suppressed. Robert's father, who is paralyzed by a stroke, cannot speak or even acknowledge his son's presence, and the past relationship between them seems to have been one of great strain. Also home is Robert's older brother with his girlfriend, Catherine. The family is deeply involved in music, and Catherine tries to reach Robert by having him play the piano for her, but he is unwilling to give anything of himself. Finally alone with his father, Robert breaks down and shows some understanding of the state of his existence: "I move around a lot, not because I'm looking for anything really, but because I'm getting away from things that get bad if I stay." A 1972 production, edited from Five Easy Pieces starring Jack Nicholson. Color. 17 minutes.

Session(s)

Discussion of the self continues, with special attention given to an account of prevailing modes of self-realization (or "life styles") in contemporary American society. To stimulate discussion of the value commitments and senses of self implicit in several life styles today, the abbreviated version of another film, The Swimmer, might be shown. The following is a description of this film:

I Who Am, Who Am I? (Searching for Values)

Theme: The struggle for self-awareness and identity. Ned Merrill has lost the external symbols of his life (family, job and material possessions), but has not been able psychologically to acknowledge their loss to himself. Unconsciously, he starts out on an allegorical journey in search of himself, declaring that he is an explorer determined to swim home by going from one neighbor's pool to the next. Along the way, his relationships with friends, neighbors and storeowners are cruelly revealed. Finally, when Ned arrives at his own house and pathetically bangs on the door, nobody is home, the house is locked, the backyard and tennis courts are grown over with weeds. He slumps to the ground like a lost animal, recognizing his isolation at last. A 1972 production, edited from The Swimmer, starring Burt Lancaster. Color. 17 minutes.

Ned Merrill's ultimate recognition of reality reveals the pathos of a shattered self. The edited version of the film is interesting, however, not only for this dramatic moment, but also for its revelation of a cross-section of life styles as he "swims home" through numerous private and public pools. These glimpses may be used to stimulate a brief discussion of life styles in America today. The purpose of referring to these life styles is not to disparage them, or to hold them up to ridicule, or even to admire them, but merely to get something on the board to talk about. Teachers whose classes contain students who belong to minority groups--Blacks, Latinos--or who come from backgrounds of poverty and underprivilege will be able to point out that a life style that leads to disillusionment and unhappiness for one group--the socially and economically privileged--may represent the unachievable dream for another group--the poor, the Black, the Chicano.

In addition, recent studies indicate that income is no longer a reliable indicator of life style in America today, there being considerable variance in modes of life within given income brackets.[1] For example, young women and young men from the wealthier suburban communities may affect the dress of manual workers or vagrants. Indeed, one of the salient characteristics of life styles today is precisely their artificiality, that is, like costumes, they are self-consciously assumed and fashioned almost as one creates a work of art or a role for a play. Seldom are life styles assumed automatically or unconsciously enacted. Both welfare poor and international jetsetters, both ghetto "cool cats" and Southern California "pump house" surfers show the same trait: a high degree of self-consciousness about how to live. The instability in American life, which can largely be attributed to mobility and other major social changes, means that life styles tend to be assumed and discarded casually and regularly.

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[1] This discussion is adapted in large part from Joseph Bensman and Arthur J. Vidich's The New American Society (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), Part III.

A major consequence of this continuous questing for self is the development of ironic detachment and mockery. People are not only aware of the artificiality and superficiality of many life styles, they are also often bemused. The cartoons of Jules Pfeiffer record this ironic awareness for liberal, professional, and upper classes; television programs like The Carol Burnett Show and The Jeffersons poke fun at the aspirations of the working and middle classes.

Another characteristic of life styles today is the tendency of persons with similar interests to withdraw into enclaves or to form their own "status spheres." Youth, women, ethnic groups, rebels all try to build protective shells around themselves, but with little success as the world inevitably obtrudes and makes its demands felt. The "cool cat" must contend with the law and the police; the pump house gang member reaches the age of twenty-six and adult responsibility; the uncertainties of social life disrupt the plans of the blue and the white collar worker.

Thus the cost of self-consciousness and ironic self-detachment is a certain discomfort and unease. People ask, at each phase of life, "What shall I do?" "Who am I now?" This makes the quest for self problematic in contemporary America.

Certain life styles and modes of living in our century also take a toll in personal and social costs, costs which modern writers have effectively dramatized. We cannot "drop out" of life, as Axel Heyst, the hero of Joseph Conrad's Victory, discovers--a novel certain teachers may want to assign. Living means involvement of self, as poets of all ages have told us. A. E. Housman's simple and straight forward poem "When I Was One and Twenty" or W. B. Yeats more complex "A Nun Among the School Children" bear eloquent testimony to the necessity of everyone's worshipping "idols" and getting involved in life.

Having shown a film like The Swimmer and discussed some characteristics of the contemporary quest for self--or having read aloud and discussed "When I Was One and Twenty"--the teacher might end a session with references to other quests for self in both older and modern literature; e.g., Cervantes"s Don Quixote, Twain's Huckleberry Finn, Wordsworth's The Prelude, Saul Bellow's Herzog, and many others--as well as in the three writers to be used as exemplars in this unit: Dostoevsky, Ralph Ellison, and John Stuart Mill. The quest for self--and the ideal--is an archetypal theme in literature and art. All of us are in search of the Grail.

Session(s)

A final session hour could be devoted to a discussion of the week's reading assignments in Dostoevsky, Ralph Ellison, and John Stuart Mill (if these are assigned). The following provides some notes on these writers and explains why they were selected.

****

Fyodor Dostoevsky, Notes from Underground

Notes from Underground is often assigned to college classes in English or the general humanities because it is a moving short novel and a seminal example of a work in which self-awareness is not merely the subject of analysis but is presented as an experience that engages the student's emotions and intellect. Dostoevsky never tired of exploring the consequences of free moral choice. This work gives a reader unforgettable insight into the consequences of complete and unlimited freedom on the development of the self. Dostoevsky's "underground" man discovers that he is living in a world with no apparent moral order or significance, except for whatever meaning he can give to his situation by exercising his gift--or curse--of free choice.

The discovery of self is thus predicated on the notion that we are beings capable of both thought and action, and, therefore, we forge our identity through meaningful interaction with an environment from which we are increasingly estranged. The heightened self-consciousness of contemporary man and the impingement of society on his life may force him inward, and hence, by

Developing individuality, one may well separate -- or alienate -- himself or herself from society and the world. The misfortune of the Underground Man is, perhaps, that the twin burdens of total freedom and self-consciousness are such as to betray him into complete inactivity. By virtue of his own hypersensitivity to situational complexities, he is rendered incapable of decision, or so he allows himself to believe. Thus, the intensification of self-awareness carries with it the potential for self-deception and paralysis of the faculty of choice. Added to this is the ironic detachment, mentioned earlier, that as reflected so often in the heroes of modern fiction does not even allow the alienated one the luxury of feeling like Shakespeare's Prince Hamlet, whose powers of choice and action are paralyzed by the magnitude of his problem. Rather, a contemporary hero is more like T. S. Eliot's indecisive Prufrock -- "No, I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be, but an attendant lord...."

When presenting Notes, the teacher should keep in mind the following considerations:

1. Like the leaders of the ancient Greek communities, many of us believe that our present fate is political and we are thus concerned with the dissolution of the community. According to Dostoevsky, however, what has pulled us apart from one another will not be healed until we find a way to recover ourselves as "individuals," until we are an integral part of a transcendent order of meaning. (Dostoevsky eventually concluded, especially in another of his works, the novel called in translation either The Possessed or The Devils, that religion and certain religious institutions are preferable to inhumane and nihilist socialist doctrines.)

2. Dostoevsky attempts to oppose the thoughts and behavior by which each man is measured by others against his own inner conception of himself and to delineate the ways in which he questions this inner self. What thus appears to be a debate between a narrator and some unknown opponent is actually the narrator's dialogue with himself about different and often conflicting aspects of his own personality.

3. Dostoevsky is, at best, hesitant to predict the success in the recovery of individuality through choice and action consequent upon choice, particularly if the person insists upon complete autonomy.

a. The exercise of total freedom can result in the person's being betrayed into complete inactivity. The capacity to will is in a sense paralyzed. While the atrophy of this capacity may well be permanent for the underground man, there is no suggestions that it need be this way for us.

b. To be in a heightened state of awareness, i.e., to be attentive to one's psychical and physical states, is both a desirable and debilitating process. The extreme of the debilitating aspects of this process is seen in the underground man's constant and unproductive analyses, a hesitation engendered not by a dullness of intellect but rather by a troubling phenomenon in which the person cannot bring any sort of order to the intellect or sensibilities.

c. The attempt to analyze experience, to give reasons as to why one thinks and acts in a certain way, is something of a distortion of the details of these events and an impediment to a spontaneous response to experience.

d. Giving reasons or expressing one's experiences in an objective manner can actually be a form of self-concealment.

4. Through the often incisive comments of the "narrator," Dostoevsky maintains that an individual is irrational, even capricious, in refusing to be categorized or limited by law-like observations, precisely because he is affirming his individuality. The narrator scoffs at the presumptions of scientific theories which propose to explain all human behavior on the models of science and rationalism. If a crude form of behavioral determinism were embraced, freedom of the will would be reduced to mere illusion. It is a self-limiting form of freedom which Dostoevsky wishes to defend.

Study Questions

Teachers who decide to assign Notes from Underground may find the following useful in provoking discussion:

1. Explain the significance of the recurrent mathematical "twice two makes four."[2] Does Dostoevsky believe that the laws of science can give an adequate description of purposive human actions?

2. Using the Underground Man as an example, explain some of the difficulties in becoming self-conscious. Include in your answer a brief analysis of the following remark: "We are people of the idea, and we rightly fear that the intellect will dry up the blood in our veins and wholly check the emotional and creative part of the mind."[3]

3. According to the Underground Man, choice is a limitation on freedom. Explain. What is Dostoevsky's view on this issue, as distinguished from the "narrator" of the work?

4. Is it possible to attain absolute freedom of self-expression? If so, would the consequences of absolute freedom be desirable?

5. Comment on Dostoevsky's ambivalence toward two very different modes of existence, i.e., the simplicity of the agrarian life, the intellectual sophistication of the urban existence. Does he resolve this ambivalence?

6. From what Dostoevsky implies, can we say that introspection necessarily results in self-knowledge? Do we ever have complete knowledge of our own private experiences?

7. Comment on the following remark made by the English philosopher Stuart Hampsire:

> While I am conscious, I am always imagining and contriving that things should be other than they are. I am always pursuing possibilities. My nature and character at any moment are identical with the plans I am freely pursuing; I have no real nature apart from my own renewed choices of what I am to be.[4]

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[2] See Nathan A. Scott, Jr., "Dostoevsky--Tragedian of the Modern Excursion Into Unbelief," The Tragic Vision and the Christian Faith, ed. Nathan A. Scott, Jr. (New York: Association Press, 1957, p. 190.

[3] See Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination (New York: The Viking Press, 1950), p. 286.

[4] Stuart Hampshire, "Sartre the Philosopher," Sartre: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Mary Warnock ("Modern Studies in Philosophy"; Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1971), p. 59. Reprinted from the Observer (May 12, 1957).

8. Some persons are unable to lead full and productive lives because of their inability to exercise self-determination and to change self-destructive patterns in their lives. Comment on Dostoevsky's treatment of these themes in both Parts I and II of the *Notes*. (This question lends itself very well to small group discussions on problems of greatest interest to the members, possibly involving the presentation of short essays clarifying various perspectives on the question.)

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Ralph Ellison, *The Invisible Man*

In an interview published in 1963, the Black American novelist Ralph Waldo Ellison remarked that the search for identity is *the* American theme. The nature of our society is such that we are prevented from knowing who we are. It is still a young society, and this is an integral part of its development."[1]

The Invisible Man is thus of a piece with *Notes from Underground* in that alienation and the quest for self are basic themes in each. Although there are several ways to examine Ellison's work, teachers might examine the work's thematic structure and its relations to other literary works having a similar concern.[2]

Parallels with *Notes from Underground* have often been noted:

1) the concerns for individuality and freedom which reach into the depths of human personality;
2) withdrawal by the hero into the underground caverns in order to re-group psychic forces;

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[1] "The Art of Fiction: An Interview," in *Studies in Invisible Man*, ed. Ronald Gottesman (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), p. 45.

[2] For a discussion of ways to study Ellison's novel, see Stewart Rodnon's "Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*: Six Tentative Approaches," in the Gottesman collection.

3) the testing of the limits of human possibility before the significance of sympathy and human brotherhood can be understood;

4) the questioning of social, religious, and political reality.

The work is built on the quest motif common in myth. As was noted earlier, this quest motif is a common one in literature of all ages.

The quest for self in Ellison, however, centers on the quest of the Black hero for identity in a White and essentially inhospitable society. It is pertinent to keep in mind, however, what Ellison sees as his major concern as a writer: that is, the larger tragic struggle of humanity. In response to a question about social realism which has preoccupied other writers of his time, he said that

> Most of the social realists of the period were concerned less with tragedy than with injustice. I wasn't, and am not, primarily concerned with injustice, but with art.[3]

It is simply that in American life the struggle of the Black is an integral part of American history, and Ellison, although Black, is an American writer. Is, then, Invisible Man simply a novel about man's tragic quest, or is it a Black protest novel that powerfully depicts what it means to be Black in America? In the 1950's, when the novel appeared, most thoughtful readers said the former. Today, after the racial events of the past decade, there is a tendency to view it as a classic expression of the injustices visited upon Blacks in this country.

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[3] Gottesman, p. 39.

Whatever the preferred interpretation, the book's themes are obviously timely. Hypocrisy--of both Blacks and White pseudo-liberals -- is one. Black-White relations is a second one. A third theme is the progressive disillusionment of the hero, his gradual loss of innocence as he experiences the actual world through a number of situations. (The disillusionment with Bledsoe and the Brotherhood are cases in point.) The fourth theme of initiation (investigated in a later Unit of this course) prompts a comparison of Ellison's work with works like Twain's Huckleberry Finn, Faulkner's The Unvanquished, Salinger's Catcher in the Rye, and Bellow's Herzog, to mention only a few.

These then are some of the reasons for assigning Ellison's The Invisible Man. While time may permit only the Prologue to be assigned, students should be encouraged to read the whole novel, especially as its purely literary qualities can very well be referred to in a later unit.

Study Questions

1. What role does humor play in both Dostoevsky and Ellison? Do you find the novel "funny"?
2. Why do you think the narrator takes a detached attitude toward the happenings in the novel? Compare the narrators in Dostoevsky and Ellison.
3. Do you think it is possible, as Ellison says of himself, to be an artist first and a Black second?

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Autobiography of John Stuart Mill

In each of the preceding instances, in Dostoevsky and Ellison, the heroes undergo what might be called an education of the self through a crisis. The clarification of the self achieved thereby was the result of a heightened and often painful self-consciousness. Both protagonists discovered that, as John Morris has said of Mill and Wordsworth,

> the power of an experience resides less in the event than in the response to it. The world and life had meaning only in their experiences of it, and that depended on the rigor of the self. The self could die, they discovered, and, when it did, the world died with it. Recovery was not a mere reversion to natural health but...a rebirth to a new world. Self-consciousness they knew to be, in Mill's phrase, 'the daemon of the men of genius of our time,' and to that self-consciousness the age owed 'much both of its cheerful and its mournful wisdom.'[1]

The philosopher John Stuart Mill brings a highly analytic self-consciousness to bear in his autobiography as he tries to understand the mental crisis of his early twenties. A teacher may want to have students read this crisis in Mill's life for (a) the light it sheds on the power poetry had in restoring Mill, and (b) for its usefulness in providing a bridge to Unit II, in which the powers of literature are studied in more detail.

Mill further helps to highlight one of the standing intellectual issues of the modern period: how can the culture of science (or logic in Mill's case) and the analytical habits of mind it inculcates be balanced against the culture of the imagination with its intuitive, poetical bent of mind. In Mill, in other words, we find a persuasive account of why the habit of poetry ought to complement the habit of analysis in any worthwhile life. (The student might be referred to Whitman's "When I Heard the Learned Astronomer," a poem that figures in a later unit of this course.) Besides casting light on the problems of self-discovery, then, Mill helps to provide a rationale for the humanities, for clearly he perceived the importance of the humanities not only as cultural enrichment but as vital to the very processes of life itself. At a time when "technique" has become pervasive in modern society, Mill's message has additional significance.

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[1] Versions of the Self (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 29.

Study Questions

1. Why, according to Mill, should the habit of poetry complement the habit of analysis? What effect had Mill's early education had upon him in this regard?
2. In embracing poetry, does Mill turn his back on his earlier training?
3. Why do you think Mill despaired at the thought of all of his dreams suddenly being realized? Is there something in the processes of becoming a self that finds this repulsive?
4. Compare the crisis of self in Dostoevsky, Ellison, and Mill. How are they similar and different?
5. What were some other things, in addition to reading poetry, that Mill tried in dealing with his crisis?
6. Why did Mill not seek assistance from his father?
7. What did Mill consider to be the excellence of analysis?

8. How did Mill come to regard happiness and its attainment?

9. Discuss Mill's reaction to the reading of Wordsworth.

10. Read Lionel Trilling's Preface to The Liberal Imagination for the relevance of Mill's crisis to modern liberalism and democracy.

11. What are your own views regarding the relation between thought and feeling? Would you agree with Wordsworth that "Our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all of our past feelings."

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E. Additional Reading Suggestions for the Teacher

1. Irving Howe, ed. Classics of Modern Fiction (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968).

Excellent commentaries on four authors recommended: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Conrad, and Kafka. Also includes novellas by and commentaries on Flaubert, Henry James, Thomas Mann, and Saul Bellow.

2. Robert Louis Jackson, Dostoevsky's Quest for Form (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

A study of his philosophy of art.

3. W. T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy: Hobbes to Hume, Vol. III. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1952), pp. 154-190, 296-347.

This work is a general and readable history of philosophy, including brief excerpts from the original sources and Jones's clear summary of each position.

4. Albert William Levi, Literature, Philosophy, and the Imagination (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962).

For an illuminating discussion of the differences between "the scientific chain of meaning" and "the humanistic complex," see Chapter 2.

5. John N. Morris, Versions of the Self (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1966).

The Introduction discusses the values Mill found in Wordsworth's poetry, and Wordsworth's own record of his search for self in The Prelude.

6. James Olney, Metaphors of Self (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972).

Contains a chapter on Mill, as well as discussions of Montaigne, Jung, George Fox, Darwin, John Henry Newman, and T. S. Eliot.

7. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is a Humanism," Existentialism From Dostoevsky to Sartre, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1956, pp. 287-311). Meridian Paperback.

8. George Alfred Schrader, Jr. ed. Existential Philosophers--Kierkegaard to Merleau-Ponty (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967).

A collection of excellent critical essays on existential methods.

9. Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1953).

The Preface relates the crisis in Mill's youth to the paradox of liberalism, especially its relation to the emotions.

10. Ronald Gottesman, ed., Studies in Invisible Man (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Pub. Co., 1971).

11. John Hersey, ed., Ralph Ellison: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974).

12. John M. Reilly, ed., Twentieth Century Interpretations of Invisible Man (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970).

Three collections of critical essays on Ellison all published in the 1970s, which testify to the novelist's growing stature.

13. William Barrett, Irrational Man. Anchor Books.

A study of Existentialist thought, particularly as it relates to contemporary artistic expression.

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F. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. The interview format may be used as a means of revealing aspects of the personality, as anyone who saw. As examples of well-integrated individuals, see Studs Terkel's interview of Colleen Dewhurst on PBS, and Dick Cavett's of Katherine Hepburn on The Dick Cavett Show. An interview of Ralph Ellison on a Chicago TV College program is available from the City Colleges of Chicago on audiotape.

2. As illustrations of individuals who are having difficulty coping with the multiple roles of the self, it would be appropriate to include excerpts from the films Play It As It Lays and Diary of a Mad Housewife.

3. The Wall by Jean-Paul Sartre (Film).

The story deals with a disillusioned revolutionary who comes to realize that all of his choices have been externally motivated.

4. USA: The Novel--Ralph Ellison on Work in Progress (Film).

Includes a discussion of The Invisible Man. 29 minutes.

5. Searching for Values Series.

Several of the edited versions of feature films in this series would be effective in initiating discussions centered on the self. A sampling:

The Dehumanizing City...And Hymie Schultz
The Fine Art of Aggression
My Country Right or Wrong?
Politics, Power, and the Public Good
Pride and Principle
The Right to Live: Who Decides?
A Sense of Purpose
Spaces Between People
Trouble with the Law
Violence: Just for Fun
When Parents Grow Old
Whether to Tell the Truth

Most of the films average from fifteen to twenty minutes in length.

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E. Appendices to Unit I

Teachers whose background contains little formal training in philosophy may find the following brief summaries of theories of knowledge and self helpful:

1. Descartes on the Self
2. Hume on the Self
3. Sartre on the Self

1. Descartes on the Self

a. Importance of Cartesian View

The importance of the Cartesian view to subsequent theories of personal identity should be noted, if only by the most general reference to the theory. The Cartesian model of the self provides a general introduction to some significant historical problems of subjectivity which are presupposed in Notes from Underground. According to Descartes, each individual discovers that he exists as a continuous, mental substance whose unified perspective is assured through distinct moments in time. The discovery of self-awareness as primary and beyond question leads Descartes to claim that immediate knowledge of the self is the condition for knowledge of all other entities.

> So to exist has, in a way, been to think, and the Cartesian formula--Cogito, ergo sum--has, to a considerable degree, summed up the lone and final certitude of the modern voyager. He has not been able to live out of any deep center or equilibrium of being, beneath the level of the mental or the ideational, for the circumstances of his culture, with all the spiritual disorder that they have involved, have condemned him to the terrible despotism of the mind.

There is no more profound expression of concern over the closed Cartesian cogito than the writings of Dostoevsky, and his work may certainly be read from a philosophical perspective.

b. Methodical Doubt

Preliminary to his investigation into criteria necessary for complete certainty, Descartes examines those items which can be brought within the sphere of the doubtful. It is, he believes, necessary to treat as provisionally false all that can be doubted. The question is actually what sorts of beliefs do we have that we can find reasons for supposing the evidence is insufficient. Descartes is not necessarily looking for substitutions for the propositions he is considering, but he is rather trying to establish indubitable evidence for certain propositions, i.e., evidence which persuades us of either the truth or falsity of these ideas but excludes the possibility of both truth-values. The method is highly exaggerated in order to show the eventual absurdity of doubting these notions. His investigation attempts to rethink philosophy in order to discover the foundations of knowledge. By "foundations," we may assume he means those basic ideas which put us in a better position to know other aspects of our view. This is an ambitious piece of philosophical writing, since he presumes to be establishing the foundations of all the sciences. Possible areas of deception include the following:

a. That his own bodily existence is in question;

b. That the empirical world may not have the characteristics he supposes;

c. That everything he takes to be the world might be placed in his mind by an evil genius, who is deliberately misleading him as to the characteristics and relationships amongst items in the world.

Descartes believes he had discovered a truth as indubitable as a self-evident proposition in geometry in the idea that he doubts, and thus engages in thought, and from this information infers that he exists. The one process not subject to doubt is the fact that he doubts, raises questions, and engages in a kind of skepticism. Doubting thus becomes a model for "thought," by which Descartes means all that we are conscious as operating within us. No evil genius could possibly deceive me into believing that I was thinking, if I were not. However much I doubt, I must exist, for otherwise I could not doubt. In the act of doubting, my existence is manifest. To form concepts is, for Descartes, to exist. If thinking is beyond doubt, there must exist a being who thinks and whose existence is guaranteed in the performance of cognitive processes. Hence, his famous dictum, "Cogito, ergo sum," "I think, therefore I am."

c. Implications of the Cogito Argument

a. The criteria for personal identity are based on an immediate, direct grasp of one's mental processes, the cognitive faculties.

b. Mind and Body are two distinct substances.

c. The individual has privileged access to the contents of his own mind, such that personal knowledge becomes the condition for knowledge of other facts.

d. The private contents of consciousness are so clearly experienced that they afford sufficient criteria for self-knowledge.

e. There is one individual subject of thoughts and experiences who persists as a psychical unity through time. As bodily characteristics have a certain continuity, so too does the psychical self.

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2. Hume on the Self

a. On the Nature of Mind and Experience

Hume's arguments suggest there is no unifying principle which assures the continuity of our experiences. We have no impression of ourselves other than the collection of diverse and temporally distinct experiences that we undergo. Whatever else we might claim about the notion of "mind," Hume maintains that self-consciousness cannot be a distinct state accompanying the contents of experience--e.g., I am aware of the colored patch but not of myself having the experience of the colored patch. For Hume, the process by which we become attentive to experience has no dimension other than temporal succession. Experiences appear to precede and follow one another with no apparent unity at one instant in time or continuous identity at different moments in time. If time means change and alteration, then Hume argues there could be no continuous idea of self.

(1) According to Hume, we cannot know anything of which we do not have an impression. The word "impression" is a highly technical term for Hume, and there has been considerable controversy over the meaning of this notion. A basic explanation of impressions might emphasize that they are the elemental constituents of experience. The world can be described through these simple elements which can be accounted for without reference to anything else.

(2) We cannot conceive of anything of which we do not have an impression. We have no impression of mind (or physical bodies), except as a collection or bundle of impressions. These impressions are contingently related to one another by the fact that 1) they resemble one another; 2) they succeed one another in time; and 3) one perception is presumed to be causally related to another.

(3) Hume opposes Descartes' thesis that there is a single and unified notion of personal identity continuing through time. Hume believes that we mistakenly conclude a succession or series of related but distinct impressions gives evidence for affirming the existence of a single, continuous impression of self. Neither the sensory nor rational faculties give evidence for a permanent self, so Hume concludes that the imagination, together with the apparently constant and coherent nature of our perceptions, persuades us we are experiencing an uninterrupted impression of a permanent notion of self.

(4) Analogy of the Theater. Think of the mind as being rather like a theater stage upon which events are "played," the successive acts being the stuff of experience. When one subtracts all the dimensions of the stage, leaving only the successive experiences, he has properly grasped Hume's theory of the mind.

Although Hume's theory of mind seems abstruse and inimical to scientific thought, he writes so clearly as to be accessible to anyone who is willing to make the effort. His Enquiry into the Nature of Human Understanding can be tackled with profit by the serious-minded student. His On the Standard of Taste should also be referred to later on in this course when the inevitable question of whether one person's taste in art is as good as anyone else's comes up.

3. Sartre on the Self

a. Sarte describes the self as a multiplicity of decisions made actual through involvement in definite activity, but he is careful to note that these concrete actions do not constitute a continuing sense of identity. Consciousness is no substantive thing, and it both is and is not its own decisions precisely in the sense consciousness *means* the freedom to exist in process. We discover our potential for freedom in the realization that we are always more than any sum of our decisions, *if* we exercise and act upon the capacity to form new projects. Our most reliable knowledge of ourselves, other than as free agents, consists in a negative awareness, i.e., we discern those attributes which we do *not* possess. Our awareness is also negative in the sense that we are unable to objectify ourselves; the self is the elusive horizon.

b. Sarte concurs with Hume in the view that the self is no thing or entity. Human consciousness must be described negatively, i.e., as that which is deficient in empirically observable properties. To be conscious is precisely to lack an objective vantage point to assess oneself in relation to other beings and one's general surroundings; for Sartre, it is impossible to reflect upon consciousness. The chief point in this argument, however, centers on Sartre's conviction that the one structure of consciousness is the capacity for change or the potential for intentional action. Hence, the metaphor that consciousness is translucent and the now celebrated doctrines that the structures of consciousness are freedom and time. Sartre also offers some wry observations to the effect that becoming conscious is not always a successful endeavor, since we continually try to be non-conscious and thus relieve ourselves of the responsibility for our choices. Indeed, it would appear that such deliberate forms of self-deception are as much a structure of consciousness as the capacity for free decision.

c. Negative states, and hence deliberate changes, exist in the world only by virtue of human agency, the capacity for intentional action. We continually give significance to a course of action through choices which both embrace and exclude certain alternatives. And thus, in a sense, we create whatever meaning or notion of identity we may hope to achieve. These intentional decisions would have little import if they were not carried out within the context of the individual's factual surroundings. By definition, these surroundings serve as limitations on his decisions, but Sartre argues that one has at least the *capacity* to transcend these limitations--still another explanation, perhaps, of why consciousness never becomes an object but remains an elusive horizon. It is probably true in a trivial sense that we are not those decisions with which we were previously identified, but Sartre has in mind a far more ambitious doctrine--our unique capacity as human beings is predicated on our aspirations and potential for realizing those aspirations.

d. Sartre recognizes the possible frustration and reversal of intentions. The process of choosing contains its own implicit parameters, since by deciding on an alternative, the individual is, for the present, excluding other alternatives. Sartre's answer to this problem, however, makes clear what is suggested in Dostoevsky's criticism of underground individuals. Those alternatives which are not chosen remain available to the individual as potentials for activity, and thus, choice is a limitation on freedom only if it is construed to be other than an ongoing process. A much more serious problem for the view concerns the reversal of decisions through consequences unforeseen in the original choice. Human action is neither particularly rational nor predictable, and yet the agent is always responsible.

e. The process of choosing is further complicated by the existence of a phenomenon which Sartre describes as "bad faith" or self-deception. We both affirm and deny a certain project, while to some extent concealing from ourselves the existence of the deception. Some ambivalence toward our free capacities must certainly be the case, for when faced with the responsibility for our decisions, we attribute our actions to predetermined causes. Most of us cannot deal with the fact that nothing in our past experience, no specific "personal trait" and no omniscient power, necessarily influences either the course or quality of our existence. Self-deception is not a passive experience, for the act of concealing responsibility requires some understanding of what is to be repressed and what is to be admitted. To decide which information is to be repressed is already to know, however dimly, the nature of these desires.

f. In summary, consciousness is never envisaged apart from a dynamic relation between thought and active participation in the world. "Consciousness is always consciousness of (something)." The self is, then, a multiplicity of "negative" perspectives created through existential acts and demonstrating no structure other than the potential for freedom. "Existence precedes essence." We must, if we are to realize ourselves, make choices--even if the universe in which we live is without purpose. Thus Sartre's existentialism, as his novels and plays demonstrate, is an atheistic one.

Perhaps the best way for the teacher--and the student--to get the flavor of Sartre's and other existentialist thought is through fiction or drama, especially Camus's The Plague and The Stranger and Sartre's own plays, especially No Exit.

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PART TWO: CULTIVATING THE SELF THROUGH CRITICAL AWARENESS

II. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: LITERATURE

On Learning to See

When it comes to the world embodied in a great book, a newcomer's eye has to learn to see. That ordinarily requires not a little active exploration. And the seeing as it develops is going to entail considerable readjustments.

On Gaining Attention

I would always project any passage that to me seemed to deserve especial attention. The screen reminds of the movies and thereby attracts.

On Assignments

Selection is after all the fundamental principle in living. Without it we get nowhere.... For students being introduced to a strange and great new author, more than half his utterance can be to them a hindrance rather than a help. Selection, therefore, is a necessity--indeed, the only hope.... Abridgement, then, in a critical sense--selection operating with the most sensitive discernment of relations it can achieve--may reasonably claim to be no mutilation, to be indeed a necessary clarification.

I. A. Richards

II. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: LITERATURE

Overview

The basic assumption of this unit is that before the presentations and possibilities of self in the humanities can be intelligently experienced, appropriate critical skills must first be fashioned. Accordingly, this unit introduces students to the elements and forms of literature. The instructional approach, one that can be applied to all the arts, encourages students first to discover the effects of particular works and then to try and specify the causes of such effects. In this way students arrive dialectically at definitions of elements and forms. Rather than stressing the distinctions between genres, the unit emphasizes the expressive power of all literature.

Objectives

1. To introduce students to the expressive power of literature.

2. To indicate the importance of literature in personal experience and public life.

3. To provide opportunities to develop techniques of literary analysis.

4. To indicate how critical analysis affords clarification of the peculiar meanings and values of works of literature.

Assignments

(To be assigned at the start for discussion during succeeding sessions.)

The Elements of Literature (to be duplicated and distributed to students; Section B of this Unit)

Suggested Poems for Study

T. S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

W. H. Auden, "The Unknown Citizen"

Henry Reed, "Naming of Parts"

Suggested Short Story for Study

Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis

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Contents

A. Introduction
B. The Elements of Literature
C. Suggestions for Teaching
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions
F. Appendix: Additional Study Guides and Illustrative
    Analysis of Poems and Short Stories

A. Introduction

When Hamlet answered Polonius's question, "What do you read, my lord?" by saying, "Words, words, words," he was distraught and embittered. Literature, as lovers of Shakespeare know, is not just words. It is a stage for human activity. This unit, therefore, is designed to demonstrate to students the uncommon power of literature to communicate perceptions of the world. Poetic revelation is presented first as a lived experience, as a reception not only of another's response to the opportunities and limitations of his environment but also of another's expression of attitudes, beliefs, and response to his own potentialities. It is believed that through a grasp of artistic literary communication in its various forms, students will become more aware of their own humanity and their own world.

The unit approaches all of its content as Poetry. That is to say, speeches, TV commercials, poems, short stories, and plays are all considered to be species of Poetry, which in Greek meant "making" or "creating."

How can students be encouraged to appreciate the special power of Poetry? This unit emphasizes the value of asking the right kinds of questions: e.g., Why does this or that poem move us?

How does a poem reach a peak of intensity? What is the nature of the poem's content? Asking such questions enables the second phase of poetic appreciation to evolve, i.e., the activities of analyzing, defining, and categorizing. But students should realize that poems are alive and vital before they analyze them. Analysis should be seen as a tool for developing greater awareness of Poetry's complex powers.

The strategy of the unit involves several steps. It moves, first, from a consideration of such poetic devices as repetition, climax, and intensity to, second, a discussion of the distinctly literary means of diction, tone, and metaphor, and finally, to an examination of such broad notions as theme, character development, and plot.

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B. The Elements of Literature (to be duplicated and distributed to students)

Language has many uses. Sometimes we read or listen for information, sometimes for pleasure, sometimes for edification. When we read a newspaper we are not primarily concerned with the way in which the account is laid out (unless it is incoherent or garbled), with the pace and tone of the language, or with the way things develop toward a climax. But when something is written as a deliberate, carefully-crafted work designed to have meaning aside from whatever particular things it describes or whatever events it relates, it becomes Literature (with a capital L). We are moved or pleased or edified by its images and the aesthetic effects of its organization of words and ideas. It is multi-dimensional. Not only is it about something, but it is something. As Archibald MacLeish put it, "A poem must not mean, but be." Or if it must be said to be about something, we find that ultimately it is about ourselves and the human state.

All literature (poems, speeches, short stories, novels, dramas, films and even radio and TV commercials) is multi-dimensional language by which artists communicate their perceptions of the world in all its aspects to their fellow man. Sometimes these forms of literature are separated into categories for purposes of study: lyric and narrative poetry, short stories and novels, the performing arts, plays and speeches. But much more important to the student without a special interest in literature than defining the categories of literature--all of which overlap--is developing a sensitivity to its distinctive power so that we can grasp and evaluate it.

The following outline is a guide to all the poems, speeches, stories, dramas, films, and radio and TV commercials that you will find in this unit. Not every question can be related to every work. Some poems do not tell stories; some stories are not metrical. But part of appreciation is learning the right questions to ask.

I. The Subject of the Work

A. Literal Subject -

What is being described?

What is the work "about"?

B. Tone of the Work -

Does the work presume any private predispositions on the part of the reader or listener?

Is the work about you? In what way?

Or is the work just information about someone else?

If it is not about you, then what good is it?

C. Associative Subjects -

What does the work suggest to the reader or listener?

What kind of associations does the literal subject have with life as you live it?

Does the work refer to a lifetime of experience or to something which happened just once?

With how much knowledge of circumstances is the reader or listener provided? Is there a detachment from circumstances; could the events have occured anywhere?

Does the work create continuing life or merely suggest it?

How logical is the relation between ideas, images, and events?

II. Narrator or Speaker

Who is speaking?

The author?

A character in the work?

Is the speaker talking about his own experiences or about the experiences of someone else?

Can the reader or listener trust the speaker's explanations and evaluations?

Is the stage of activity external and physical? Is it in the mind of the speaker? Or in the mind of the characters he describes?

What difference do these points of view make?

To whom is the work addressed?

To the speaker himself?

To the reader directly?

To a character in the poem or story?

What difference do these frames of reference make?

Does the point of view or frame of reference shift?

Do the ideas or events have different levels of importance for the speaker, for the characters in the work, for the reader?

Is there an irony in these contrasts?

III. The Characters

Does the work involve any characters?

How are they brought to life?

By confrontation with other characters, foils who afford an opportunity to reveal something about a main character?

By what the speaker or narrator says about them?

By what other characters say about them?

With which character are you most concerned?

Are his plans and aspirations blocked by other characters, by external forces, by his own personality or limitations?

Does a character change? Physically? Economically? Socially? Psychologically? Morally? For better or worse?

Are there complex changes in the character--e.g., a social degradation but a spiritual growth?

Diction

Do the words refer to abstract ideas or to concrete objects and experiences?

Is the language formal? Familiar? Slangy? Vulgar? Regional?

Does the diction change in the course of the work? How does this relate to the other things that happen as the work develops?

Principle of Organization

Length and Divisions -

How many lines are there in the work?

Are they arranged into stanzas? Are the patterns of arrangement regular?

Are sentences used? Simple or complex? Are they questions or assertions?

Is the dominant grammatical mood indicative, subjunctive, imperative?

Is there a basic rhythm in the language?

Is it consistent or do the patterns vary?

Is there rhyme? What is its pattern?

Does every line have the same number of syllables?

Does every line have the same number of accented syllables?

Are any other sound devices used?

Repetition of words?

Repetition of consonant sounds?

Repetition of vowel sounds?

How do these patterns of rhyme, syllables, and accents relate to the subject of the work?

Ideas and Events -

Are the ideas or events organized in any of these ways:

As a temporal sequence, narrating the events as they would occur in time? Ordered in the sequence in which things are noticed or experienced?

In a psychological order? An order of increasing intensity?

Moving from the concrete to the abstract?

In a random order? An order of free association?

Are several modes of order involved? Does the work shift, for example, from a temporal sequence to an order of free association?

How logical and consistent is the organization: Does it observe normal limits of time and space?

How is the order important to the reader's or listener's response?

Does the work answer the questions it raises?

Action -

Is there a fully developed plot? Part of a plot? If only part, what is missing? Is the action and struggle physical, mental, emotional?

What events are expository: presenting the setting or background information?

What events are developmental: presenting or furthering the conflict of the story?

Are the events restatements and reinforcements of the theme of the work?

Are there several themes? Several conflicts?

Where is the ultimate turning point of the action reached? Is it presented

as the most intense crisis?

as the final confrontation?

as the fateful decision?

Is the climax as clear to the character as it is to the reader?

What is the final result of the story?

Are all the problems resolved?

Does any character understand the problems and their resolutions?

Is any character better off for what happened?

Is the end a new beginning? Is there hope?

Performance

Is the work a "performance"? How do the movement, gesture, color, sound, light, and space combine with language to produce an effect?

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C. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

The topic of the first session(s) can be an analysis of two speeches -- e.g., Lincoln's "The Gettysburg Address" and Malcolm X's "The American Nightmare." A teacher may want to duplicate and distribute the following paraphrase of Lincoln's speech to the class.

****

Paraphrase of Gettysburg Address

Eighty-seven years ago, a new country was started here, based on freedom and the idea that everyone should get an even chance.

Now we are fighting a civil war that is testing whether or not this type of country can survive.

We are meeting on a great battlefield of this war. We are meeting to dedicate a cemetery for those who died here so the nation can survive.

We should do so.

But, really, we cannot dedicate or consecrate this cemetery. Those who died here did that far better than we can.

The world won't remember what we say here, but it will remember what they did here.

It is our job to finish the job they started. We should be inspired by those who died here and see to it that they didn't waste their lives, so that this country shall have a new start based on equality, and that democracy shall continue on this planet.

****

After recordings of both speeches as originally written are played for the class, the teacher should ask why the paraphrase of the Lincoln speech seems flat, even though it contains all the information which the speech itself contains.

The students might paraphrase Malcolm X's speech and then decide what it is that the speeches as originally written have that the paraphrases do not have. There is also the further question as to what a speech delivered effectively has that the same speech when read in a book does not have?

The class discussion should result in isolating a variety of literary devices, such as repetition, climax, intensity, rhythm, and metaphor.

Perhaps the audiovisual department of the college can arrange to record a TV commercial on videotape or videocassette that can be played in the classroom for this session. Obviously music and the visual and graphic arts contribute to the overall effectiveness. But a paraphrase of a commercial's message will show how much of each commercial is a rational argument, how much is nostalgia, emotional association, or decorative metaphor. Students should be reminded that commercials can trigger large boosts in national sales of products advertised. The point is that art and artistry are powers that can be used or abused. As consumers, we have to defend ourselves against abuses.

Session(s)

The topic of another session(s) might be the nature of poetry. The following widely anthologized poems are good ones to use in the classroom: T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," W. H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen," and Henry Reed's "The Naming of Parts." The last-named, because of its immediate appeal, makes a good jumping-off point.

Henry Reed, "The Naming of Parts": Suggestions for study:

1. Listen to a recording of the poem.
2. Where is the poet? What is he doing? Is he enjoying what he is doing?
3. What elements in his surroundings does the speaker single out? What do some of them have in common? How do they contrast? How can the contrast be expressed in a general way?

The following sentences are awkward and ungrammatical

"...the piling swivel, which in your case you
have not got."

"You can do it quite easy
If you have any strength in your thumb."
Who speaks these lines?

A temporal sequence is given:
"Today...yesterday...and tomorrow..."
What is the significance of it?

Certain sounds are repeated to emphasize the lesson in arms: "This is the lower sling swivel. And this is...And This is..." With what does the reader associate the unpleasantness of the sounds?

4. As the poet's attention moves to Japonica, to the gardens and bees, what changes take place in the sounds of the words, etc.?

5. The poem is called by some critics a statement of revolt. But a revolt in what sense?

6. The daydreaming of the poet has sexual overtones. Double meanings run throughout the poem.

7. The sexual overtones and the double meanings suggest a more significant contrast. The garden, the bees, the workings of parts of the rifle are associated with life and the generation of life, while the purposes of the rifle and military life are associated with death and destruction.

8. The poem is organized into five sections of six lines each. Is there any rhyme? Any regular meter? Any use of repetition of vowels or consonants?

9. Is there any increase in suggested or literal activity in either of the two parallel parts of the poem? For example, the rifle lesson moves from description and naming to manipulating the safety-catch and sliding the bolt. The fantasy moves from glistening gardens to eloquent gestures to assaulting. At what point are the references to the rifle and to sexual play merged into one? What is the "point of balance which in our case we have not got"?

* * *

W. H. Auden, "The Unknown Citizen": Suggestions for Study

Overall Organization. The ten sentences are laid out to look more like a long bureaucratic memo ("see form plus To JS/07/M/378"). Some students will note that there is no regular length to the sentences (run-on line technique). This makes the poem look like prose. The rhyme scheme is irregular and only line 23 doesn't rhyme. The pace and rhymed couplet form of the last two lines reinforce the ironic climax! There is a calculated "prosy" sound to the language.

The poet gradually gives us a profile of the kind of citizen viewed by a bureaucratic society as perfect. The ironic humor of "Fudge Motors" and lines such as 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26 add e emphasis by guiding the reader/listener to piece together the reality of the citizen's life--a seemingly grey, colorless existence that allowed for no real individuality (hence the "unknown" citizen) or life.

Questions

1. Why doesn't the poem "look" like a poem?
2. What "kind" of language is used?
3. Where is humor used? Why?
4. With what color should you associate the poem? Why?
5. Why is the rhymed couplet effective for the last two lines?
6. Describe the rhyme scheme.
7. Why are such terms as "Bureau of Statistics," "Producers Research," "Eugenist" used throughout the poem?
8. What is meant by "in the modern sense of an old fashioned word, he was a saint."?

9. Why is the poem entitled "The Unknown Citizen"?

10. Is there a basic irony in the poem?

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T. S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock": Suggestions for Study

1. Listen to Eliot's recording of this poem (LP, Harvard Vocarium, L-6002; or LP, Caedmon, TC 1045).

2. Describe the physical setting of the poem, the social class depicted, the occasion.

3. What is the tone (see "Elements of Literature" above) of the metaphors?--e.g. "Patient etherized upon a table," "The cat-like yellow fog," "the bug pinned on a wall," "the ocean-crab," "the eternal Footman snickering," "Lazarus," and "a player in Hamlet."

4. What is the "overwhelming question" that Prufrock faces? Is it resolved? What meaning does it have beyond the purely literal level?

5. How does Prufrock view himself? What does he think others are saying about him? What is his realization?

6. Why is the name "J. Alfred Prufrock" appropriate to this kind of man? Why is his job appropriate to his problems of coming to grips with life?

7. What of the women mentioned? ..."Talking of Michelangelo"

   What's the difference between people who casually wander through galleries talking about art and people who create art? Or people who spend their lives among china coffee cups and people with the energies of a Michelangelo?

   ..."arms braceleted and white and bare"

   To what extent has Prufrock committed himself to another person?

..."sea-girls wreathed with seaweed"

What joy is there in his life? What freedom? What intensity? Why don't they sing to Prufrock?

8. Is it appropriate that the organization is irregular? That a definite pattern of meter is at one time established and then changed? That a rhyme scheme is established and then changed? How is this like Prufrock's life?

9. Can "Prufrock" be described as a "dramatic monologue"? Is there evidence that there is someone to hear what the speaker says? (The student might very well be asked to read a dramatic monologue by Browning--"My Last Duchess," "Andrea del Sarto"--to see how the dramatic monologue works.) Or is "Prufrock" a soliloquy, with no implied listener. (The student can be referred to Browning again: "Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister").

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The session might end with a summary of the importance of diction and common literary devices in poetry. By way of anticipation, it can be pointed out that diction is also important in the study of prose fiction.

Session(s)

Both the short story in general and a story assigned for class reading are the topics of discussion for this session. Franz Kafka's Metamorphosis--a story that both baffles and intrigues students--is employed for sample analysis in this unit.

When asked why he preferred the short story for his medium, the Irish writer Frank O'Connor replied:

> Because it's the nearest thing I know to lyric poetry--I wrote lyric poetry for a long time, then discovered that God had not intended me to

> be a lyric poet, and the nearest thing to that is the short story. A novel actually requires far more logic and far more knowledge of circumstances, whereas, a short story can have the sort of detachment from circumstances that lyric poetry has.

The students might be asked to consider in what ways short stories and poems are similar.

A careful reading of The Metamorphosis requires the reader to center attention not only on character and action, but also on levels of interpretation. Kafka's story is complex and can be read as a parable or allegory. It should stimulate discussion about the nature of self, the family, value, and purpose in life. The questions asked below, however, can be asked about any story.

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Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis: Suggestions for Study

Language. How does Kafka use language? Does it overflow with poetic imagery? Is it like the ravings of a lunatic? Is it composed and rational? How does this stylistic choice heighten the effect of the story? (Students should be reminded that Kafka wrote in German.)

Setting. What is the business world like from Gregor's point of view? What sort of portrait is drawn of family life? What kind of world did Gregor live in before his transformation? How do his family and business associates react to his predicament? Does this world really change or is it simply revealed by what happens to him?

Main Character. What is Gregor's main concern over his predicament? How does Kafka detail his realization of what has happened? What kind of a person is Gregor? Confident? Selfish? Noble? Arrogant?

Change. How does Gregor's astounding physical change dramatize the frailty of the human condition? Existentialists write of anguish, guilt, meaninglessness, absurdity. Are these ideas found in the story? Is there any sort of logic that runs through this fable or is it entirely irrational? Do the people around Gregor change?

Pattern of Imagery. The story begins with Gregor awakening from a dream. If we analyze the effects of sleep and dreams, we find that Kafka has taken an ironic stance in this regard. Why? Is Gregor awake or dreaming? Is this a nightmare? Is the change in him explainable if it is not a nightmare? How is Gregor's job as a commercial traveler fitting in regard to the analysis of sleep and dreams that is found here?

It has been suggested that there is a parallel between this story and a story of St. Augustine's dreaming that his soul had become a spider. Is this an appropriate comparison? Is Gregor's body or soul, or both, transformed?

It has been argued that the story is about a test of love, a test of family. Christ spoke of love for people in horrible physical conditions: lepers. Job's love of God was tested through all kinds of physical and emotional anguish. J. D. Salinger in one of his Franny and Zooey stories raises the question as to whether the love of the Christian message is also to be extended to the "fat lady with the cancer." Is Kafka writing of man's love and determination being tested? How does he rate man and the family?

Levels of Interpretation. Readers of the Bible know that the scriptures can be read on several levels. On one level, as in the *Book of Kings*, it can be read as history. On another, as in the *Song of Songs*, it can be read as symbolic. Much literature is this way.

Kafka's works have had many interpretations. What meaning can you find in the story?

From a religious point of view? Who caused this to happen to Gregor? God? If so, why would a loving God do this? How can He permit evil? Or is God merely playing games with him? Or perhaps God does not exist? If God does not exist, then what purpose can there be to a life like Gregor's?

From a sociological point of view? What is the individual's worth? Is it defined by his estimate of himself, by his skills on his job, by those who love him, by his usefulness in society? Does he have an essential worth? How are the institutions of society relevant in human struggles against anguish, meaninglessness, desolation? What of the family? Friendship? Business?

From a psychological point of view? Is this an hallucination? Do we take comfort in the notion that it might only be a dream? Does Gregor slowly lose his mind? Does he undergo a transformation into a thing and not a human? What is the irony of his attempts to find logical responses and patterns of behavior in an insane predicament?

In what way is this a story about Everyman?

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D. Additional Reading Suggestions

The following may be of value to anyone teaching this course whose specialty is something other than literature:

1. Monroe C. Beardsley, Robert W. Daniel, and Glen H. Leggett, eds., Theme and Form: An Introduction to Literature, 3rd. ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).

Different kinds of literature are organized thematically, e.g., "Early Years," "Man and Woman," "The Nature of Good and Evil," etc. Introductory essay, "The Study of Literature," is excellent.

2. Jacob Drachler and Virginia R. Terris, The Many Worlds of Poetry (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).

Poems are organized thematically with exercises at the end of each section. Sample themes: "Secrets of Childhood," "Love's Direct Address," "Faith and Doubt," "Faces of Death," "Men and History."

3. Knox C. Hill, Interpreting Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

A volume designed to help the general reader improve his ability to interpret different works of literature. Chapters on history, drama and fiction, philosophy, and rhetoric.

4. James McMichael, The Style of the Short Poem (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1967).

This is an intensive study of fifteen poems. It emphasizes tone, diction, organization, meter, and rhythm. Both "good" and "bad" poems are used as examples.

5. Edward W. Rosenheim, Jr., What Happens in Literature (University of Chicago Press, 1960).

This is a guide to poetry, drama, and fiction which seeks to encourage habits of reading which often students have not developed. The approach is through the elements of literature.

6. Lionel Trilling, The Experience of Literature: A Reader with Commentaries (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

Excellent selections and commentaries by an outstanding teacher and literary critic.

7. Walter Blair and William Chandler, Approaches to Poetry (Appleton-Century Crofts, 1971).

Introductions and Notes are helpful, especially in distinguishing literary genres and explaining elements of poetry.

E. AudioVisual Suggestions

1. Four-minute film of Patrick Butler's The Letter. Illustrates a theme with which the unit began: that poetry is a performance, even when read privately. Students may be asked to read the scene before they see its two performed versions. They may be asked which mode of direction is more like their own conception of the scene. One version is directed as a comedy, the other as a tragedy. Not a line is changed, although most people find this hard to believe. Only one major gesture is altered: a playful slap with a pillow in the comic version becomes a slap with the hand in the tragedy.

2. Short film clips of Richard Burton and Sir Laurence Olivier in Hamlet. With the showing of these clips the unit could come full circle. It is seen that plays, TV commercials, poems, speeches, and even short stores are all "performances." What is more, all the elements of literature integrate in each category, although an abstract analysis may tend to emphasize diction in one, plot in another, or performance in a third.

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F. Appendix to Unit Two: Additional Study Guides and Illustrative Analyses of Poems and Short Stores

The analyses given above are designed primarily for the teacher who has had limited experience in teaching the skills of literary appreciation. The following questions about other poems are designed for the use of the student. The poems are found in many anthologies, represent levels of complexity, and hold immediate appeal. A teacher may want to assign the poems in question for out-of-class use.

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Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"

1. Listen to a recording of the poem.
2. What is it that the poet regrets? About what is he optimistic?
3. Note references to time: "searching for rubies by the Ganges," "from ten years before the flood until the conversion of the Jews," "the slow growth of a vegetable," "the years needed to praise adequately his mistress," "the winged chariot of time," "deserts of eternity," "making the sun stand still or making it run."

Is there any pattern to the arrangement of these metaphors? How does the movement from the search for rubies (which one might never find), to the eons until the conversion of the Jews, to the growth of empires, to the fitful engagements of amorous birds of prey, to the sun rushing through the sky emphasize the urgent intensity of the poet's plea?

4. How are the meter (iambic tetrameter) and rhyme scheme (rhyming couplets) important in establishing the tone of the poem? Compare this with the same elements in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." What do the time and pattern of the poem have to do with the ideas of time and life?

5. This poem is a love song. How is it different from that of Prufrock?

6. How can the shift from the sensual imagery surrounding the delightful admiration and praise of the beloved to the metaphor of the grave be explained? And the shift to transient things: "morning dew," "instant fires," "devouring time," "tearing pleasures with rough strife," "making the sun run?" How do these shifts establish a thematic unity in spite of their differences?

7. Man's short span of life is emphasized in "We Real Cool" (see below)and in "To His Coy Mistress." What devices are used in either poem to emphasize this theme? What is the difference in the characters' awareness of this reality? Is there a difference in the references to death and pleasure in the poems?

8. Compare the references to women in "We Real Cool" "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," and "To His Coy Mistress." Are the women objects, persons, symbols of self-fulfillment?

9. Is this a poem an ingenious attempt at seduction or does it make comment on life?

****

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"

1. Listen to a recording of the poem.

2. The poem is organized into four stanzas of regular length. Students should be asked to describe the meter and rhyme scheme.

Does this regularity have any relationship to the ideas expressed in the poem? Is the tone one of quiet composure, anxiety and regret, or urgency?

3. There is no other activity in che woods; the poet is alone; it is quiet. How does all this establish the attitude of the poet about his decision?

4. What images emphasize the far-reaching effect of his decision?

5. What images emphasize his impulse to shun conformity?

6. How old does the poet seem to be in this poem? What devices and images reinforce this impression? (What time of the year was it when he walked through the woods?...spring, summer? Is the poem in the past tense, present tense?)

7. Compare the main character, or speaker, here with Prufrock and with the speaker in "To His Coy Mistress" with reference to the following:

    --how each finds a purpose in life.

    --how each is dependent only on himself or needs others.

    --how each defines himself according to pleasures, commitment, acquisitions.

8. The sound pattern is worth examining. The first stanza repeats d, r, and l sounds quite often. The last stanza emphasizes s sounds. Is there a progression from one tonality of sound to another? Is the change from the first stanza to the last related at all to any difference in mood or idea? Is there more a feeling of irreversibility toward the end? Stanza 1 mentions "sorry." Are there more tones of regret at the end? Is the regret more a nostalgic yearning for the opportunities of youth or an anguish over unfulfilled life? Does the poet suggest that speculation on "what might have been" is justified? Or fruitful? Should we be satisfied that we make the most of where our lives have taken us?

* * *

William Carlos Williams, "Blueflags"

1. Listen to a recording of the poem.

2. By actual count, this poem has about forty distinct sensory references. To what senses does the poet appeal?

"The Road Not Taken" deals with nature in terms of an important philosophical realization about life. Is "Blueflags" like that? Or does it refer to anything other than the experience of the concrete objects which it describes? Is the experience external or internal? Is it concerned with an attitude about the totality of life's experiences or with something that happened only once?

3. Are things presented in terms of their relationships to each other? Do we know, for example, the exact spatial relationship between the car, the marsh, and the small houses? Is this order based on logic? On a seasonal sequence? On an intensification of effect? On the sequence in which things happened to be sensibly received in experience? Are things in this poem susceptible to measurement in time and space?

4. There is a high proportion of function words in the poem which do not relate to concrete entities, words such as "the," "in," "where," and "with." The poem is two long rambling sentences. The repetition of such words and the loose syntax give a primitive, simple effect. The experience is a small, uncomplicated one, without great intellectual and emotional importance. Each impression tends to be isolated and not dependent on a relation with the rest of the experience. Compare this with the effect of the sentence structure in "We Real Cool."

5. In Frost's "The Road Not Taken" six of the lines begin with "And." This device tends to suggest the unstudied, unexpected, unplanned nature of the choice of the two roads. But the reflection on the meaning of the choice in later stanzas is a developing awareness of the far-reaching effect it had. Is there reflection on the meaning of the experience in "Blueflags"?

6. The sentences in "The Road Not Taken" tend to get shorter as the poem advances. How does this pattern compare with the pattern in "Blueflags"?--How does each of these poems compare with "To His Coy Mistress" in logically presented order, in length and number of sentences, and in the use of words such as "And" or "the."

****

Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool"

Overall Organization. After an introduction of the characters (as in a play), the poem is comprised of three-word sentences. After the first, each sentence begins with "We" at the end of a line. Each sentence rhymes AA BB CC DD in the simplest possible manner. (Even word-to-word rhyme is used: "thin gin.") Slang is used ("cool," "Jazz"); also alliteration: "lurk late, strike straight."

Movement of Ideas. By using "childish sentences," demotic grammar (first sentence has no verb), and slang, the poet reveals the horror of the youth-gang experience. The recurrent "We" emphasizes the insecurity and conformity of the group. The tragedy of the gang member's existence is further shown by the frank acceptance of early death and a consequent lack of enjoyment in or reverence for life. Each stanza shows another facet of gang life.

Study Questions

1. Why are all the sentences three words long?

2. Why is "We" at the end of all but the last line?

3. Why are all the words one syllable?

5. Why is the poem so short?

6. Where is bad grammar used? Why?

7. Where is alliteration used?

8. What is the rhyme scheme? Why?

9. How do the "We" think of death? How is this emphasized in the poem?

10. How is boredom revealed in the poem?

****

James Dickey, "In the Pocket"

Overall Organization. A stream-of-consciousness technique is emphasized by the visual layout of the poem. The lines are uneven; broken sentences and phrases force the reader to try to reconstruct the thoughts and images coherently. An almost total lack of punctuation adds to the intentional confusion of the reader (intended to emulate the confusion, etc., of the quarterback in the poem). The poem moves with an uneven pace that seems to gain speed until the broken sentences and phrases finally become just verbs (lines 20 and 2 'with caps'). The lack of final punctuation increases the feeling of urgent incompleteness.

Movement of Ideas. This poem follows the actions of the quarterback from just after the snap of the ball to his a) passing the ball? or b) his being tackled for a loss? The words KILL and DIE seem to make the poem and/or the game go beyond football to perhaps a general comment on life and/or why people watch football.

Study Questions

1. Why are all the lines uneven?
2. What actually is happening in the poem?
3. Why is there an almost total lack of punctuation?
4. Why are the last words capitalized?
5. What is the pace of the poem?
6. Can this poem mean anything beyond football?
7. How is the reader placed in the same mental situation as the quarterback?
8. Why isn't rhyme used?
9. Why isn't the end of the poem specific about what happens to the quarterback?

****

Rod McKuen, "Plan"

Overall Organization. There are three sections, each progressively shorter. The sentences are broken into lines for emphasis, e.g., "on a quiz show." There is no rhyme, no alliteration, just plain prose.

Movement of Ideas. The poem is a comment on the materialistic, consumer, nonreverent, soft, unrealistic mentality of our time. It states flatly that such a mentality "expects" everything and that that is "too much." What is missing is the idea of "earning." Starting with the ludicrous idea of being married on a quiz show, there is a listing of material gifts (including "a girl")--

everything is equal, nothing is special. In the second stanza there is an enumeration of ideal and grand expectations. The last line reveals the ridiculous nature of such a consumerist attitude.

Study Questions

1. Why does each stanza become shorter?
2. Why is the poem so brief?
3. Why is not rhyme used?
4. Why is "an art form" listed in the first stanza?
5. How does the poet first impart the idea that Max has ridiculous values?
6. Why is the communication more effective as a poem than it would be as prose (say, as a paragraph)?
7. Why is line seven important?
8. How would you label this poem: Idealistic, realistic, pessimistic? Why?
9. What effect does the listing of items create?
10. Why does the poet use actual brand names?
11. Is the thought of this poem complicated? Uncomplicated? Would you compare it with that of "The Road Not Taken"?

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John Haines, "And When the Green Man Comes"

Overall Organization. (X) Five stanzas. The fifth is subdivided for emphasis and "wonder."

(X) Each of the first three stanzas is one sentence.

(X) The last two stanzas form one long complex sentence.

(X) The first three stanzas use the repetitive "b" sound. The last two avoid it completely (for emphasis) and move to "d" and "r" and "s" (alliteration).

Movement of Ideas. The poet uses concrete descriptive terms in a fanciful way, e.g., "a wind blowing in his head shakes down a thought that turns to moss and lichen at his feet" and "breath distilled by butterflies." He is made gigantic--bigger than life--"the valley shudders where he stands." It is a hymn to man attuned to nature--they are one, and the greater for it. With litter of chips and empty cans--modern man?

Study Questions

1. Is alliteration used? Where?
2. Why are the stanzas of irregular length?
3. Why are such "negative" things as mud, dung, and maggots included in the poem?
4. What feeling is generated by this poem?
5. How does the poet give the "green man" his size?
6. Why does the poet include "empty cans" in the poem?
7. Can the "green man" stand symbolically for anything?
8. Why doesn't the poem use rhyme?
9. Why is alliteration used?
10. How are reality and fantasy mixed? Give examples.

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III. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: FILM

> The salient feature of film is the enormous range of its specific effects. Film is unique in its capacity for visual recording and analysis, in its ability to convey the unique present reality of things, in its ability to reveal the qualities of lives; but also in its formal freedom, its capacity for realizing fantasy and developing abstract forms.... So much can be done in a film that it requires close attention and knowledge to discern what is actually being done. Technical assessment and appreciation can almost be read off from the roll of specific opportunities opened up by the director's initial options and then seized or missed.... Beyond that, the moral and cultural side of a critique must depend on the maturity and sensitivity of the critic's social and moral awareness. If you could teach someone to be a critic, you could teach him to be a man.

F.E. Sparshott

III. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: FILM

Overview

Before he can explore the insights into the self the fine arts can provide, the student must develop basic critical skills of analysis. This unit introduces students to the elements of film that distinguish it as an art form.

By understanding how filmmakers work, students will be better able to appreciate what is one of the most popular and one of the most expressive media of our time.

Objectives

1. To become aware of how film is like and unlike other media.
2. To become aware of how structure determines impact and meaning.
3. To become aware of the complexity and richness of film experience.
4. To become sensitive to the subtle ways in which messages can be conveyed via film.

Assignments

In preparation for the first session, the student should be given a copy of "The Elements of Film Expression" or "Questions on Film Form" which follow and the short story An Occurrence At Owl Creek by Ambrose Beirce with the last paragraph of the story deleted. The last paragraph may be read after the film of the short story (28 minutes) is shown in class the first session. Except for the opening session, class time should be spent in discussion. A film should not be discussed prior to its viewing.

Arrangements will have to be made for students to view Nanook of the North and Potemkin as these are major feature films.

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Contents

A. Introduction
B. The Elements of Film Expression
C. Questions on Film Form
D. Suggestions for Teaching
E. Additional Reading Suggestions
F. Additional Audiovisual Suggestions

A. Introduction

Motion pictures can tell stories with images. But a motion picture is more than a short story or novel. It is an aural-visual gesture that provides access to a world through immediate presence. It is this sense of immediate presence which provides film with its tremendous power of communication and revelation. By changing space-time relationships, film achieves presence. If students can come to understand some of the ways in which this flow is structured, they will become more aware of their own humanity and the electronic world they inhabit.

One sequence is worth a thousand pigments. How can students be encouraged to appreciate the special power of film? This unit emphasizes the values of asking fundamental kinds of questions about film:

1. How does film differ from literature?
2. How does film differ from drama?
3. Which sequences are especially moving?
4. Which sequences are "dead"?
5. Does sound affect the visual image?
6. Does color make a difference?
7. Does the film have a climax?
8. If so, how does it reach it?

9. What is the content that is revealed?

10. What is the "author's" attitude toward that content?

The questions just asked introduce the second phase of film appreciation: analysis of techniques and how they are used. Students should experience the works first. After they have viewed the film, analysis can help them understand how the film works and how it worked on them.

This unit approaches film from three standpoints: the subjective, the objective and the synthetic. The experience of film is viewed first as an "interiorization" different from the experience of literature. It is next viewed as documentary - that is, from an objective standpoint. Finally, it is examined as an artistic reshaping and condensation of "fact." Looking at film in these ways, students become aware of the import of editing, camera angles, shot length, lighting, music, symbolization, and, ultimately, such general notions as tension, conflict, character development, pacing, cumulation, shot, plot and theme.

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B. The Elements of Film Expression: A Glossary of Terms

(A teacher might want to duplicate and distribute this to students before this unit is begun.)

Film is a multi-dimensional mode of expression that tells stories through the combined flow of images and sound. It is a composite art. A film is constructed of a mosiac of shots. A single shot is a single camera operation, which may last from a fraction of a second to several minutes. The way shots are spliced together determines the form of the film.

What a film "says" and how it moves us depend on the kinds of shots and the way they function in an ongoing sequence. In film, meaning is a function of structured techniques. Film presents a stream of different images or views in movement on a screen of limited size.

Here are some of the ways these images may be changed and/or charged with meaning:

I. The first method is by movement of the subject being photographed.

II. The second method is by cutting, editing, or montage, changing the picture all at once from one view to another. This type of change is effected by filming (shooting) different views with a movie-camera, selecting the shots desired and assembling them into sequences which when run through the projector form the scenes and episodes of the complete film. (In Continental Europe this is called montage; in England and America, editing or cutting. Montage stresses the assembly, the total effects of the shots in combination.)

The second method, editing or cutting, changing from one (shot-change) is done in various ways, giving the following effects on the screen:

1. Cut: one image replaces another instantly.

2. Fade-in, Fade-out: One image fades into darkness; the next image comes out of darkness.

3. Mix or Dissolve: as the old image disappears, the new image appears, and, for a short time, the two images are superimposed on the screen.

4. Wipe: a line passes across the screen wiping out the old image and replacing it with a new.

5. Iris-In and Iris-Out: the old image fades from the edges of the screen to the center, then the new image grows in a widening circle from the center of the screen.

6. Turn-Over: the whole screen seems to turn over and continues on the other side.

III. The third method of changing images and giving meaning to images is by Camera Movement: the picture is altered continously as follows and presents a gradually cnanging view. This method employs continuous movement of the camera while shooting instead of by switching from one shot to another.

1. Tracking: the whole camera is moved bodily--the type of shot will be forward, backward, vertical, lateral, or diagonal tracking, according to the direction the camera moves.

2. Panorama: the camera is kept in the same place but turned on its axis--vertical, horizontal, or diagonal panning. A very fast turn is a zip-pan (similar to zoom lens).

3. Scale: Size of image depends on distance from camera--longshot, closeup, medium shot.

4. Framing: choice of what image is shown on screen. The frame is rectangular. The most common ratios of width to height are four to three (normal) or five to two (cinemascope).

5. Masking: the frame is made tall and narrow, circular, or any other shape, by masking, i.e., covering over part of the picture in developing the film, so that it will appear black on the screen.

6. Shooting Angles: the camera may look at the scene being filmed from an infinite number of possible angles, vertically downwards, through horizontal, to vertically upwards. Although the projector throws its picture on a flat screen, the photographic image has the property of giving a vivid impression of the third dimension, that is, an impression of relief and also of depth.

7. Depth of Field: the depth of field of a photo is the distance between the foreground and the background and the distance which is sharply focused is known as the depth of field of the lens. A long-focus lens gives less depth than a short-focus lens. Depth of field also differs with the aperture of the lens--the smaller the aperture, the greater the depth.

8. Out of Focus, Soft Focus: the picture may be deliberately left blurred or out of focus. Sometimes lenses have been smeared with grease and the scene has even been shot through a sheet of ice.

9. Slow-Motion, Fast-Motion: mechanically, the illusion of movement in the cinema is obtained by showing very rapidly on the screen a series of still photographs (silent screen; 16 per sec./sound; 24 per sec.). Each photograph is a frame (not to be confused with the framing of a shot). For the movement on the screen to be at normal speed, both camera and projector must run at the same rate. If the camera takes pictures faster than the projector shows them, the movement on the screen will be slowed down (slow-motion). If the camera takes pictures slower than they are projected, the screen will show accelerated motion (fast-motion).

Other methods of changing the meaning of an image are as follows:

Lighting. This changes the meanings of an image. Top lighting gives a sense of the ethereal side lighting increases depth, some lighting flattens the image; low lighting brings a sense of mystery and awe, etc.

Sound to enhance or detract from the visual image. It can reinforce the image through complementation; it can reinforce the image through ironic contrast or counterplay; it can diminish the image by loudness or irrelevance.

Animation. A different artistic medium. What characterizes the animated film is not that it is drawn by hand, but that it is created frame-by-frame, i.e., one picture is taken by the camera at a time instead of twenty-four pictures per second.

Decor. Costumes, props and scenery can change the meaning of the image.

Color. The use of color or color filters can change the meaning of an image.

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C. General Questions To Be Asked About Any Film

(The teacher may choose to duplicate and distribute this to students beforehand.)

1. Is the projected world pictorially plausible? If the film is a fantasy, are the images also fantastic? Are the techniques relevant to fantasy? If the film is realistic, are the images realistic? Do the objects, costumes, and decor fit the world of this film?

2. Is it a real illusion? Does the world of the film appear more unified, vivid, and immediate than everyday life? Are the images of the film and its rhythms consistent with its mood?

3. Is the experience one of depth? When you see the film a second time, do you see more in it, or less? Do you feel it made you see more? Is a second viewing boring or exciting?

4. Do the sound and sight work together? In Stanley Kramer's films the sound overwhelms the visuals; in Stanley Kubrick's films the sound reinforces the visuals by emphasis or contrast. The relations of aurals/visuals should be purposive: that is, to create one effect. The visuals should dominate.

5. Does it move? If you look at your watch, does it seem a slow film and is it dragging? (When the pacing is right, your breathing follows the rhythm of cutting.)

6. Is it a filmed stage play? If it is merely a static recording, it is probably a poor film. If the camera and editing add nothing, the film is a bore.

7. Does it make you see more? Does the film allow you to see more than you would if you were literally part of its world? Does it help you see the familiar in unfamiliar ways?

8. Do its symbols and techniques fit their situations? Do the visual metaphors and the editing and camera techniques enhance the movement of the plot and the deepening of the theme of the film? Are they appropriate to their context?

9. Does the film exhibit unity? Do you have a sense of fulfillment and completeness when the film is over? Or does it in retrospect seem to be a mere jumble of events? Does one mood dominate throughout the film? Do the sequences build to a climax and a resolution?

10. Does it strike you as a counterfeit performance? That is, does the director play upon your heart-strings to hide his lack of creativity or lack of insight? Is it the medium which is being exploited, or the audience? Is the feeling or sentiment proportioned to the filmic content?

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D. Suggestions for Teaching

Opening Session (s)

The films selected for analysis in this unit are by now classic ones, and are obtainable without too much difficulty. Teachers, of course, will have their own favorites, especially among those films based on short stories, novels, or plays. Some teachers may even want to assign a paper or a classroom discussion which requires that students view a film and read the work of fiction on which it is based outside of class. (The Ox-Bow Incident, based on Walter Von Tilburg Clark's novel of the same title, is a good choice for this kind of outside assignment.)

Before the first session, the students should have read Ambrose Beirce's "An Occurrence At Owl Creek," minus its last paragraph. Then they are ready to view the film.

They may be asked first what moved them most: the short story or the film? What is present in the short story that is absent from the film? Is there anything in the film that is absent from the short story? Other than the establishing shot, does Enrico use any "literary elements" (see Unit II) in the film?

The teacher can help students identify techniques of camera angle, distortion, pacing, visual metaphor, sound-image relationships, rhythm, framing, and other film devices. Students soon realize that literature and film are different forms, that each has its distinctive kind of expressive power. Students should also be urged to watch TV commercials and to note the ways in which film techniques are used to persuade and/or deceive.)

After all this, the students should read the last paragraph of Beirce's short story so that they can compare it with the ending of the film.

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Ambrose Beirce, An Occurrence At Owl Creek Bridge (short story)

Overall Form. The story develops in three parts. It begins on an "objective" plane, e.g., "A man stood..." and continues with descriptive passages from an omniscient point of view. Passages also include wry, philosophic speculations on death and status.

The second part moves from the objective to the subjective. The reader moves into the protagonist's experience, learns who he is and enough of his background to explain the motivation for his act.

The third phase is subjective, with the reader inside the hapless victim's mind. We see the world from his point of view. The last paragraph shocks us back into "reality."

The author's language is old-fashioned and he grows philosophic as he moves the reader inside the main character's mind. As the story moves to its climax, he heightens the pace and builds suspense by narrating in the present tense. The story reveals a highly idealistic man betrayed by a false scout, his own idealism, and the senseless brutality of war. This dwelling on death makes him and us even more conscious of the joy of living--a bitter irony.

Study Questions

1. Why the word "Occurrence" in the title?
2. Why is there so little dialogue?
3. Why doesn't the wife speak?
4. Are the images primarily visual or aural?
5. How does the author elicit identification?
6. Why is the Creek named Owl rather than Dove?
7. Do you see any other symbols in the story?
8. Do you see any personification in the story?
9. Are the levels of irony related to each other?

****

Robert Enrico, Director. An Occurrence At Owl Creek Bridge (Film)

Students should be encouraged to criticize a film in cinematic terms. That is, if they appreciate the art of the filmmaker they must become aware of the elements involved and learn to use the special vocabulary.

The camera begins low with an establishing shot. It then pans up through the rib-racked trees (sound--the hooting of an owl), frames the bridge, and tracks down to the hanging. Natural sound is exaggerated and there are increasingly swift cuts to extreme close-ups. These prompt the viewer to identify with Farquhar. The camera also pans possible routes of escape from his point of view, thus establishing further identification. A high-angle shot increases anxiety. When Farquhar falls, the camera swoops down with him. The use of technical devices (zooms, swirls, etc.) and the tempo of cutting increase in rapidity during the "escape,"as does the audio (drums, shots, etc.). The sudden jump cut back to the bridge is a shock. The camera then slowly draws back, uses the bridge as a frame and tracks up through the winter trees signaling completion (the camera has literally taken us into the story and out of it again) and supplying a pause for reflection and the draining of tension.

The film begins and ends in silence. The director uses silence, natural sound, distorted natural sound, music, exaggerated natural sound (gasping, heart-beats, etc.), drums, explosions, etc. to build tension. In contrast, the silence of the gates opening is eerie.

Visually, the film begins and ends in winter. During the fancied escape it is spring. Camera angles are used to suggest the essential character of the people and events, e.g., the imperious nature of the officer. During the "escape," the camera movement speeds us, suggesting the personal, the subjective, the frantic. The images become symbolic and ambiguous: e.g., the spider is wrapping a dead fly; Farquhar seems a Christ-figure in the sand with his wounded hands; Abby's smile is a cool smile of welcome and a frozen smile of death. Slow motion intensifies subjectivity as does lens distortion. When Farquhar stumbles, the camera stops abruptly and moves back toward him like a frightened bird. Use of the long lens makes the viewer feel that he is running through molasses. Camera tricks shape the perceptions of the viewer and bring him to acceptance of the "reality" of the events.

Study Questions

1. What kinds of sound are used in the film?
2. Are the guitar and the song supportive of the visuals?

3. How does the director make the creek appear so deep?
4. Why does the camera linger on the boot?
5. What images can be taken as visual symbols of life/death?
6. Would this film have been improved by the use of color?
7. Could this film work as a silent film?
8. Why does the director eliminate the Union scout from the film in the screen play?

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Another Session(s)

After a viewing of Nanook of the North, the students will discuss it in class. Here are questions to be raised?

What techniques were available and used by Enrico, the director of Occurrence, that were not available to Flaherty? If Flaherty had had such techniques at home, how could he have used them? Where? For what purpose? If the sound were eliminated from Nanook of the North, would it change the nature of the film? Why or why not? Would the film have been "improved" by the use of color? Is sound-over narration essential to a documentary film? To all film? Is sound-over in film like the omniscient observer in literature? By pursuing such questions, the teacher can bring greater awareness of the uses of film techniques and the way they are functioning.

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Robert Flaherty, Nanook of the North (film)

Overall Form. The organizing principle of the film is the progression of the seasons of the year. The theme is a paradoxical one: the survival of man through "antagonistic" cooperation with nature. Events of the film are presented in an order of increasing struggle, thus revealing Nanook's skill and revealing him as an heroic figure pitted against hostile circumstances. The continuity of life is shown in his training of his son.

Development. Written narration provides us with "literary" content. (Voice-over narration and music were added to what was a silent film.) The events begin with the easy life adjustments of spring and the contacts with the outside world (trader's post). As the film moves into winter and the more brutal aspects of Nanook's life, there is less and less humor. Even the dogs are shown in a more savage light. The camera pans more and more to project the loneliness, danger, and the vastness of the snow fields. Natural lighting is used throughout. (This is all Flaherty had to work with.) The plot-events are so ordered as to stress the theme of survival and to implant in the viewer the belief that Nanook will survive. (As a matter of fact, he was lost in a snow storm and died a year after the film was made.)

Study Questions

1. Would this film have been better with professional actors? (cp. The Wild Savages with Anthony Quinn and Peter O'Toole)
2. How does Flaherty reverse audience expectation?
3. What elements of humor are there in the film?
4. How many different ways is spit used in the film?
5. Do close-ups add to the savage nature of the dogs?
6. Why does Nanook sleep nude? In the middle of the family?
7. Would this film be improved by the use of dolly-shots, fades, wipes, negative printing?
8. Would color add or detract from the film?
9. How does Flaherty build admiration for Nanook in the audience?

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Another Session(s)

5. Eisenstein, Potemkin (film)

Students know that film can show action and express feeling. But some may not have experienced films that express ideas and social commentary. (Again, class discussion comes after the film has been viewed.)

Questions for Discussion

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge and Nanook of the North each have one central character. Eisenstein attempts to avoid the dominance of one central character. How? Why does he keep cross-cutting from the citizens of the town and the sailors? What is his attitude toward religion? Is Potemkin a form of propaganda? What are some differences between a "message" film and a "non-message" film? Does the message in Potemkin "intrude" and deprive the film of unity?

The point of these questions and the discussion is to demonstrate to the student that film is a powerful political-social tool. During World War II the film was used to build the morale of the citizens of the nations at war, inspire hatred of the enemy, and indoctrinate the members of the Armed Forces. The teacher may be able to arrange for showings of the Why We Fight documentary series produced under the direction of Frank Capra.

The teacher might point out that, for all practical purposes, the media can be used to create images of people: e.g., F.D.R. was always shot from the waist up and thus America saw him as powerful and effective, not as a man crippled by polio. (Television viewers saw John Kennedy as manly and assured and Richard Nixon as vacillating and shifty in the TV debates of the 1960 presidential election. Nixon's image was flawed, in large part, by poor make-up and his tendency to perspire heavily under studio lights.) Some audiovisual libraries may own copies of March of Time documentaries that show how world figures have their stature enhanced or reduced by the film medium.

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Sergei Eisenstein, Potemkin

Overall Form. The cumulative impact of Potemkin is built through the conflicting images charged by the tension of the theme. Although it appears to be documentary and appears to be history, it is really neither. It is an imaginative interpretation of documentary content, a mutiny that was part of the tidal wave of the Russian Revolution.

The film is divided into five main parts: (1) Men and Maggots; (2) Drama on the Quarter Deck; (3) The Dead Cries Out; (4) The Odessa Steps; and (5) The Meeting of the Squadron. These are deliberate progressions and reversals, with a pause between parts 1 and 2.

Development. There are two lines of development in the images and the events portrayed: one represented by the people of the city and the other by the men on the battleship. These lines are related by cross-cutting and intersection at given points: e.g., the citizens visiting the dead sailor's tent and the small boats carrying food to the living sailors. Eisenstein does not attempt to expand the action beyond the immediate activity of the fleet. But he makes the revolt a symbol of the revolution as a whole.

The Odessa Steps sequence is one of the most celebrated in cinema history and has become a model for other directors. It expands real time by editing, and builds unbearable suspense as to the fate of individuals and the crowd. The rhythm of the editing, the long-shot/close-shot alternation vary as the crowds surge up and down the steps and the danger from the brutal Cossacks mounts. The shot elements--the glasses, the boots, the roaring lion, the carriage, the baby, the cripple, the mother, the guns, the horses, the movements and counter-movements--are all ordered to make for visual urgency and maximum emotional impact.

After this exciting sequence and its climax, the rebuilding of tension goes at a more leisurely pace until the approach of the fleet. By mixing the objective, subjective and symbolic presentation, Eisenstein makes us feel that we are actually caught up in the revolution itself. He ends the film with a massive and overwhelming closeup of the prow of the ship which conveys the feeling of destiny and the inevitability of triumph. In short, he makes the revolution appear inevitable.

Study Questions

1. The music track was added later. Would the film be as moving without it?
2. Is this a work of propaganda? Why?
3. Both Occurrence At Owl Creek Bridge and Nanook of the North have only one main character. How does Eisenstein try to avoid a central character? Why?
4. What does Eisenstein think of religion? How does the audience know?
5. How many times does he use eye glasses? For what purpose?
6. Why is the dead sailor sequence shot from inside the tent?
7. Why does the last sequence present closeups of the pistons and the bow-spray in increasing frequency?
8. Would the film have been improved if the sailors had fired the guns?

9. How does Eisenstein use lighting to elicit audience sympathy?

10. From a purely visual or pictorial standpoint, is it apparent that Potemkin is not objective history?

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E. Reading Suggestions

The bibliography on cinematic art and theory is extensive and fast-growing. The following are widely used introductory texts:

1. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen, eds., Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

One of the better collections of readings on film now available Divided into seven sections: film and reality; film image and film language; the film medium; film, theater, and literature; kinds of film; the film artist; and the film audience. Selective bibliography.

2. George W. Linden, Reflections on the Screen (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Press, 1970).

Chapters one through four and seven and eight explain the differences between the arts and some of the essential differences of film form and construction. Regarding the importance of film, the author states that "Motion pictures, like dreams or rainbows, are true myths that we tell ourselves so that we may try to come to grips with what life means in the living of it. Motion pictures, when understood, end in revelation."

3. Ralph Stephenson and J.R. Debrix, The Cinema as Art (Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1965).

This book discusses the changes made in space-time by film and the various uses of film technique. Concrete and informative.

4. Richard Warshow, The Immediate Experience (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1962).

Contains the influential essays "The Gangster as Tragic Hero" and "The Westerner."

F. Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. If they were reviewed earlier in Unit II, the Olivier and Burton clips can be discussed. Discuss TV commercials or some film which is currently showing on TV to determine if a film is changed on the TV screen.

2. Tadeusz Wilkosz's cartoon Bags, a sardonic allegory of

politics and the corruption of power could be shown. The theme is that revolutions are not always a success and that we often become what we defeat. Students might also be encouraged to read George Orwell's Animal Farm, which has a similar theme.

Questions on Bags:

1. Why is the rag yellow? Would it mean something else in red?
2. Would this be as effective with drawings rather than animated objects?
3. Is the resurrected bag more or less powerful than the original bag?
4. Does the system always win? If so, how? If not, why not?

3. Many teachers show their classes Saul Bass's Why Man Creates, a series of episodes, explorations, and comments on creativity and man's history in eight segments: The Edifice, Fooling Around, The Process, Judgment, A Parable, Digression, The Search and The Mark.

Questions on Why Man Creates:

1. Is this film "episodic" rather than unified?
2. Does this film make for appreciation of the patience of the scientist?
3. Is the ping-pong ball irreverent?
4. How is "Fooling Around" related to creativity and to dedication?
5. How sound is the film's assumption that patterns of creativeness are similar in the sciences and the arts?
6. Over simplification is a trap that filmmakers--and writers who aim at broad general audiences--fall into. What about Why Man Creates? Is it slick rather than solid?

IV. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: VISUAL ARTS

Works of art can, at their best, extend the perceptive faculties to the full without satiation and as it were demand ever increased mental vivacity and grasp to contain them. This...is...a major part... of the "life-enhancing" quality of art appreciation. Years of study and experience, half a lifetime of growing familiarity, may contribute to the full appreciation of a great work of art: the experience itself is always accompanied by a feeling of heightened vitality; we are more awake, more alert than usual, the faculties are working at greater pressure, more effectively, and with greater freedom than at other times, and the discovery of new insights is their constant guerdon.

Harold Osborne

It may be taken for granted that art history deserves to be counted among the humanities. But what is the use of the humanities as such?

Erwin Panofsky

IV. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: VISUAL ARTS

Overview

This unit is predicated on the belief that the visual arts, and to some extent perceptual objects generally, possess potential for contributing significantly to humanistic education understood as the enrichment and extension of the individual's self. The contribution to self-cultivation which instruction in the proper appreciation of visual aesthetic objects can make occurs under three identifiable, yet interrelated, rubrics set forth below as objectives. The art of painting has been singled out for this unit, though it is believed that with suitable modifications the unit might be adapted to the other visual arts as well.

Objectives

1. To present a distinctive mode of interacting with the visual aspects of the environment (the aim being to enlarge the self through a unique set of responses to the world).

2. To examine a method for actualizing visual aesthetic values in their most highly developed and thus most satisfying manifestations (the aim being to extend the self through a new set of skills).

3. To become aware of the humanistic import of works of art (the aim being to enrich the self through an understanding of some of the unique characteristics as well as abiding concerns of mankind).

Note to the Teacher

Since some teachers of this course-which cuts across several disciplines-will have only little formal training in art history, it has been thought advisable to include several detailed analyses and interpretations of painting. The purpose is not to prescribe specific paintings for class study but to suggest to the teacher an approach that has proved rewarding in the classroom.

Assignments

There need be no required reading assignments for this unit. The teacher, however, may want to reproduce and distribute "The Elements of the Visual Arts" to students the first hour for use throughout the unit. Or the teacher may want to assign a reading or text in which the elements of painting are discussed and illustrated.

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B. Elements of the Visual Arts: Painting
C. Suggestions for Teaching
D. Alternative Strategies
E. Additional Reading Suggestions
F. Additional Audio Visual Suggestions

A. Introduction

Humanistic or liberal education, addressing itself as it does to that which is of immediate personal value to the individual--the cultivation of the self--is necessarily a species of value education. This value orientation should, of course, also be dominant in that portion of the humanities program devoted to the visual arts, which is the reason that the objectives stated above were couched in terms of benefits to the student's self.

A design for humanistic or value education, however, must go beyond the mere formulation of objectives. To this end the objectives for this unit have been supplemented by two sets of additional considerations. It is hoped that the schema given below will articulate for instructors some large-scale relationships and help them avoid engulfing students in a torrent of unrelated facts and images. The schema might also provide students with a useful framework for seeking, ordering, and assimilating future experiences in the domain of the visual arts.

Objectives	1. A distinctive manner of confronting visual reality	2. A method for actualizing aesthetic values of the highest order	3. An awareness of humanistic import
Value Objects	a. Objects, man-made or natural, that elicit and sustain aesthetic experience, i.e., a "special mode" of confronting the world	b. Masterpieces of the visual arts having the capacity of yielding high-order aesthetic value	c. Those works in the visual arts that exemplify, illustrate, or make vivid human concerns and values
Instructional emphases	i. The student's contribution to aesthetic experience, i.e., the attitude and disposition to be cultivated	ii. The skills of aesthetic criticism, i.e., description or analysis, interpretation, and evaluation	iii. Knowledge and scholarship with which to approach works of art so as to achieve insight and understanding

The above suggests other considerations that might be of interest to the instructor using this unit. First of all, there is a top-to-bottom movement from the broad and general to the more specific (1,2,3, to a,b,c, to i, ii, iii). By subdividing this sequence into three columns,one arrives at a rough indication of the objectives and of suitable content for each of the instructional sessions (that is, 1,a,i; 2,b,ii; 3,c,iii).

Secondly, there is a horizontal organization from the simple and basic to the more complex and inclusive. Thus students ought to have acquired the habit of experiencing aesthetically before they are ready to engage in critical analysis. Similarly, students ought to be able to describe a work of art and characterize its overall effect before undertaking to interpret it in terms of humanistic understanding.

This simple-to-complex sequencing is also reflected in the nature of the suggested value objects to be presented in each of the sessions: first to be introduced are ordinary objects which serve basic human needs; then these same objects are displayed as the subject matter of a series of paintings; next come paintings depicting these same sorts of objects in some human context, with the latter gradually gaining predominance; finally, objects and human figures are part of rather complex paintings that invite interpretation of humanistic import.

The strategy of starting with perfectly ordinary subject matter will make it easier for students to keep attention centered on the purely aesthetic properties of visual aesthetic objects. Subjects prompting curiosity or exciting empathy, on the other hand, might present initial obstacles to aesthetic perceptiveness.

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B. The Elements of the Visual Arts: Painting[1]

Visual aesthetic designs are among the most agreeable and fascinating objects in our environment. Even some of those who disdain "museum art" respond to commercial art--which can sometimes display a surprisingly high level of artistry--and thus are more aesthetically sensitive than they care to admit. But no matter how much people wish to deal with their general visual environment, where paintings are concerned a teacher should insist, as we already pointed out, that they be locked at closely and with discernment.

But the question is, what should one look for in a painting? In one respect, paintings are no different from other complex entities that from childhood we learn to deal with--we want to know how they are put together, what makes them "work," i.e., how they produce the effect they do. What child has not taken an alarm clock apart to see what makes it tick? We like to discover parts or elements, clusters of elements or complexes, sub-relationships that obtain between them, and the larger relationships that tie everything together into a unity or whole.

The mark of an aesthetically educated person is an ability to examine a painting in this manner, an ability to analyze and describe appropriately. This, however, requires acquaintance with a number of terms and concepts that apply to the elements, complexes, and relationships in paintings. Some of the most fundamental terms and concepts are presented below.

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[1] The material is indebted to the analysis of a visual design in Monroe C. Beardsley's Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958); pp. 88-96, 168-177.

A Glossary of Terms

1. The surface of a painting is frequently referred to as the picture plane. On any such picture plane one can mark off a number of items or elements (we are speaking abstractly now and not in the sense of inventorying objects represented) called areas. Areas can differ from each other in a number of ways: in their shape (circular, triangular, rectangular, irregular); in their position (with relation to the picture plane, as for instance "in the upper right corner," as well as with relation to each other, such as "to the right of" or "immediately below"); and in their color quality (hue, lightness, and saturation).

2. Another important concept is that of line: any identifiable link between two positions on the picture plane that establishes a perceptual path between them. Such a "path" need not always be an actual connecting line drawn on the surface. Very important to the analysis of visual designs are so-called "invisible lines" that flow through the composition and link certain of its areas.

3. Visible, unbroken lines can be independent elements on the picture surface or boundary lines between areas. However, a line that turns on itself so that its ends are fused makes a figure--a bottle, a flower, a human form, or some nonrepresentational item. (Incidentally, it is seldom proper, especially when dealing with contemporary nonobjective paintings, to go to great lengths trying to "figure out" what some shape or element is meant to be, since it is not necessarily meant to be anything in particular.

When describing such a picture, however, we usually fall back on the expedient of referring to its areas in terms of what they roughly resemble: a star-like figure, a funnel-shaped object, and so forth).

4. Thus far we have considered a picture plan with several areas on it. But of course they are not just dispersed indiscriminately; they are grouped, arranged in some way. Clustering of elements in a particular sector of the picture plan produces visual density.

5. Furthermore, areas of figures or elements are not created equal; there is visual dominance and visual subordination. This is partly dependent on size (obviously a larger figure will subordinate others), partly on position (for example, elements at the center of the picture plane tend to be more prominent), and partly also on color (certain colors more than others attract attention and help certain areas to stand out).

6. Although the picture plane is,objectively speaking, two-dimensional, it will almost never appear so to the eye. As soon as some visual elements are placed on it, a degree of depth is created even when space is not pictorially represented (as it would be in a landscape painting, for example). Certain colors have the property of seeming to advance or recede; overlapping shapes are usually read in terms of the spatial relationships of being "behind" or "in front of."

7. Through these and other devices, then, a painting acquires an impression of three-dimensionality. This illusion makes it possible for the picture to have visual volume or mass, the magnitude of which depends on how much of the space is partly filled and how much is void.

8. The concepts of mass and volume, however, apply not only to the picture space as a whole but also to the figures placed within it. They, too, can have the property of three-dimensionality, of being more or less weighty and solid. There are different ways in which painting lends weight and solidity to its shapes, but one of the most effective is by the use of light. It emanates from some source, often located within the represented space, and by playing upon, shading, and highlighting the forms arranged within that space, light helps to give them the appearance of fullness and volume.

9. Just as it would be next to impossible to compose a visual design that is perfectly flat or two-dimensional, so it is hard to imagine one that would be without some implicit movement. It may run along the visual paths already mentioned and guide the eye on its exploration of the composition. This would be essentially a surface movement. However, there is also spatial movement, such as that of diagonal lines seemingly thrusting themselves into the picture space. And then there are the subtler movements of tension, of attraction and repulsion, like those between elements which seem to be pushing forward from the picture plane and others that appear to be receding away from it.

10. A key term that has not yet been dealt with is form. It is also a very slippery one since different and conflicting meanings have been attached to it. For instance, some say that form means the total web of relations among a work's parts. Taken in this sense, there would be nothing in a painting that would not also be a formal element. Form can also be taken to

refer to only the more prominent, large-scale relationships in a painting. But then form becomes synonymous with what is usually meant by structure, which, in turn, is very close in meaning to composition. (We shall not insist here on a very precise nomenclature.) Thus when it is said of a painting that it has a triangular form (or structure or composition), this indicates that the visual paths connecting the most prominent areas form a triangle. The thing to bear in mind about form or structure, then, is that it refers to relationships, how the work is put together, what makes it cohere (or fall apart if there is a weakness of form).

11. Texture is another rather vague concept. Many understand it to denote the tactile surface of the painting, that is, whether the paint is applied smoothly, thickly, with regular or irregular brush strokes, and so forth. Others contrast texture to structure and take it to mean small-scale relationships in the work--transitions between neighboring parts, color gradations, and the like.

12. Finally, something should be said about style, another much used and much abused term. It is perhaps best to think of style as having to do with recurrences of certain features, within historical periods, schools of painting, or the works of a single artist. Style is most often used to classify art works produced in given historic periods. The characteristics associated with period styles are simply those features that tend to recur in the paintings of that time. In the case of Italian Renaissance style, for example, [illegible]urrent properties would be,

among others, clarity of outline, a certain stability of structure (achieved through a preference for horizontals, verticals, and a compositional arrangement that is complete within and reinforces the picture frame), and an overall quality of dignity, serenity, and repose. Paintings identified as Baroque, on the other hand, evidence recurrence of another set of features: drama, excitement bordering on the theatrical and hysterical, a blurring of outlines to emphasize movement, a preference for diagonal lines and for compositions that seem to spill out over the picture frame. When one speaks of the style of a particular artist, one also thinks of recurrences of features that serve as a trademark. They are simply what all his works seem to have in common, his handwriting, as it were.

Aesthetic Quality

Up to this point we have developed a modest catalogue of things one should look for in a painting. But what about aesthetic qualities? Aesthetic experience pays careful attention to the aesthetic qualities of objects while deliberately ignoring whatever other attributes these objects might have. Aesthetic qualities are simply the perceptual properties that belong to the elements and complexes of a visual design and, of course, also the properties possessed by the work as a whole. Once one has assumed a sufficiently receptive attitude toward the aesthetic object, there should be no problem in becoming aware of the whole array of its aesthetic qualities. They demand to be noticed.

But difficulties develop when we attempt to describe these qualities; our vocabulary is no match for their variety and subtlety. One makes do with what the language has to offer and often describes aesthetic qualities in terms of primary and dependent attributes: e.g., a "warm" red, a "cool" blue, a "refreshing" green. "Warm," "cool," and "refreshing," the dependent attributes, are not qualities that inhere in a painting; they are ascribed to it metaphorically. Or lines have direction (horizontal, diagonal, vertical), configuration (waving, zigzag), and thickness. But they may also be described--metaphorically--as "meandering," "irresolute," or "nervous." Shapes, in addition to being square, smooth, or irregular, can also be described as "shrinking," or "aggressive."

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C. Suggestions for Teaching

Opening Session(s)

The opening session should be devoted primarily to emphasizing that a special sort of attention must be exercised in order to extract from the visual environment in general, and the visual arts in particular, whatever aesthetic value they have to offer. As will be explained shortly, this mode of interacting with visual objects requires of students a measure of effort and self-discipline.

The instructor wanting to disabuse a class of the notion that the aesthetic experience is effortless and spontaneous might launch a brief discussion of the different kinds of experiences individuals are capable of having by confronting students with a collection of objects from which one of the themes for this unit will evolve. The theme revolves about how different human interests can grow out of a basic necessity of life--food. The objects confronted might be a selection of fruits and vegetables perhaps. The students will be asked not only to look at the objects, but to try to think of different ways of looking. The objective is to help them to understand that what anyone sees depends largely on the aims and purposes he or she brings to a situation.

First of all, there is the sort of casual visual experience in which the object rarely attracts notice, but becomes a stimulus to flights of fancy. For example, someone upon seeing apples lapses into childhood memories involving apples--Mother baking apple pies, picking apples as a child. This is not an aesthetic form of seeing and attending, though in earlier times it was believed--and to some extent still is today--that the function of the visual arts is to entice the imagination to wander where it will. But clearly, flights of fancy abandon the object of perception for a world of private and subjective reveries. This leads us to a cardinal rule of aesthetic experience: the strictest attention must be paid to the perceptual object.

This attention to the perceptual object is also neglected in a second and equally inappropriate reaction, the purely emotional response. It may not be easy to illustrate this by use of the objects now before the students; cabbages and cucumbers are unlikely to incite strong passions, one way or another.

Still, it is important to emphasize that aesthetic experience is not primarily emotional. This idea may arouse disbelief and even resentment. It must therefore be clarified. One must grant that aesthetic experiences are associated with feelings of pleasure and the experience of aesthetically rich objects can in fact be quite exciting. However, these feelings are not themselves at the focus of the aesthetic experience. That focal point must at all times be occupied by the visual aesthetic object itself.

Students' responses in the form of "It makes me feel..." or "I feel that..." should be discouraged from the start. They are not so much descriptions of the object as they are reports on the inner state of the percipient. Such reactions can, however, usually be converted into statements about the perceptual object with little difficulty. (For example, "I really feel calm, relaxed, and at ease with this work" could be "This work has a calm, serene, quiet quality").

Yet minute attention to certain features of the perceived object, combined with a state of emotional detachment, still does not define the aesthetic experience as a unique experience. People look closely at an object for a variety of reasons and tend to notice primarily those visual properties that answer to their purposes. Apples, for example, can be examined from a number of practical points of view: the housewife will examine the fruit carefully for defects; the person who prefers a certain flavor will note the properties that differentiate a Jonathan from a Red Delicious or a Rome; the retail merchant will watch for size, and so forth. None would probably subject an apple to closer scrutiny than the pomologist. Yet his interest would be primarily theoretical or scientific, rather than practical or aesthetic.

Evidently aesthetic perception cannot be distinguished from other types of seeing merely by the intensity of one's concentration on the object. Rather what makes it different is the viewer's absorption in visual appearance for its own sake. The individual experiencing an object aesthetically, then, attends closely to its surface properties to the exclusion of all other considerations--such as how the object makes him feel, what he might learn about it, how he could use it, what its cash value might be, and so forth. In short, the individual holds in temporary abeyance all the other and more customary modes of experience. Aesthetic experience is so disinterested as to allow an object to display what may now be called its aesthetic qualities. This distinctive attitude toward, or way of interacting with, external reality also yields a distinctive value--awareness of the aesthetic aspect of the world which reveals objects in their perceptual particularity, completeness, and uniqueness. People who never learn to experience aesthetically remain stunted in their personal development.

Rather quickly, students should have a reasonably good grasp of what the aesthetic experience involves--a detached and fairly unemotional yet thorough absorption in an object's perceptual properties or aesthetic qualities--and how the aesthetic experience differs from other kinds of experience. They should be encouraged to experience each of the displayed objects aesthetically, concentrating on the shapes, the colors, the textures of the apple or the orange. They should also be encouraged to talk about what they notice, though they might find this difficult because they lack the terms to use.

Aesthetic attention encompasses not only particular objects but also spatial relationships among them. A useful classroom exercise is to arrange a group of objects in various ways--a table setting, kitchen utensils, etc., so that students become aware thereby of elements, complexes, and formal compositional arrangements.

After this, the time is right to direct attention to works of art. Below is a suggested list of paintings representing several historical periods and several cultures. Slides of the works can be projected fairly rapidly, though student comments should not be discouraged. Dates of these works are mentioned only to demonstrate that a subject as everyday as food has had wide appeal throughout the ages.

List of Paintings:

Composition with fruit and game from Pompeii, 1st century B.C., wall painting, Naples, Museo Nazionale.

Mu-Ch'I, Six Persimmons, Southern Sung Dynasty, late 12th century. Daitokuji, Kyoto, Japan.

Pieter Aertsen, The Meat Stall, 1551. Museum of Art, Uppsala University, Sweden.

C. Arcimboldi, c. 1565 Bowl of Vegetables which is seen as a human head when inverted. Cremola, Italy, Museo Ala Ponzone.

L. Susi, Still Life, 1619. St. Louis, City Art Museum.

Juan Sanchez Cotàn, Quince, Cabbage, Melon, and Cucumbers, The Fine Arts Society of San Diego, Cal.

Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin, Still Life: Bowl of Plums, 1759. Phillips Collection, Washington.

L. Melendez, Still Life, 1772. Madrid, Prado.

R. Peale, Still Life, 1818, Detroit, Institute of Arts.

Edouard Manet, Still Life with Carp, 1864. The Art Institute, Chicago.

H. Fantin-Latour, Still Life, 1866. Washington, D.C., National Gallery, Chester Dale Collection.

Vincent Van Gogh, Still Life with Apples and Two Pumpkins, 1885. Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, The Netherlands.

Paul Cézanne, Still Life with Basket of Apples, 1890-94. The Art Institute, Chicago.

Pierre Bonnard, Le Compotier Blanc, 1921. Acquavella Galleries, N. Y.

René Magritte, Chambre d'ecoute (The Listening Chamber), 1955. Collection of William N. Copley, New York.

Tom Wesselmann, Great American Still Life No. 19, 1962. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Burton G. Tremaine, Meriden, Conn.

Andy Warhol, Campbell's Soup, 1965. Leo Castelli, New York.

Discussion Questions

After the slides have been shown, or perhaps at appropriate junctures during the showing, students might be asked questions like the following:

1. Is it easier or more difficult to attend aesthetically to real objects or to painted representations of them?
2. How is the viewer helped by the fact that a painting is delimited, i.e., is framed?
3. Attention has previously been paid to perceptual relationships between real objects. How does the

surface area of a painting become important to relationships between the painted objects?

4. Think of depictions of food items as we are accustomed to seeing them in advertising. Are they different from the paintings just shown? If so, in what ways? What is the purpose of the depiction in advertising?

5. Could many, or indeed any, of these paintings be used for advertising? Why?

6. Which of the works impressed you most? Why?

7. Would you say that realistic, real-life depiction was the major concern of most of these artists?

8. It is often said that art expresses great ideas or deep emotions. The paintings just shown clearly do not; yet they are undeniably works of art. In view of this, what other functions do you think the visual arts can serve?

"Elements of the Visual Arts: Painting" (Section B above)--should be distributed for study in preparation for the next class discussion, or, if a teacher prefers, a reading that supplies similar information should be assigned. The students' recollection of the paintings viewed during the first hour will help make the content of the handout or assigned reading more meaningful.

If feasible, students might be asked to purchase small-sized reproductions of all or some of the paintings viewed during the opening session.

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Session(s)

The purpose of this hour (or hours) is twofold. The primary objective is to give students practice in aesthetic criticism, an opportunity to demonstrate growing critical awareness. During the first part, criticism will be restricted more or less to analysis and description of a work of art; during the latter part, the distinction between subject matter and content will be made and the critical skill of interpretation will be introduced.

A secondary objective is to see how the artist can take a simple theme and convert it into something of considerable human interest. Students will be made aware of the human bent toward turning the satisfaction of basic needs into ceremonial occasions that have values of their own: eating to satisfy hunger becomes the ritual of the family meal, the party, the fête champêtre, the formal banquet. (After all, it is significant that Christ used the Jewish ceremonial Passover meal, the sedar, to found what is at the heart of many Christian liturgies, the Eucharist or Communion.) Students should also become attuned to painting as supplying commentary on human affairs.

Since discussion will center on critical appraisals of works of art, a matter barely touched on earlier might open the discussion: the difference between the work of art itself and the objects experienced in the work. A work of art has a maker who wanted his work to please or move us aesthetically. Basic questions arise. Was he sufficient to the task? How does the work achieve whatever effect it has? What are its merits? Its defects? Aesthetic judgment, then, is not an exercise in fault-finding; it is the only way to do justice to the artist and his work.

Sample Analysis:

For our purposes we shall use H. Fantin-Latour's Still Life (1866), a painting discussed earlier. Students should be invited to talk about this work, using some of the concepts contained in the "Elements of the Visual Arts." Most students should discover on their own the main characteristics of this work as listed below. If not, questioning and prodding by the instructor will prompt them to notice these features.

1. In the main, the objects represented are of three kinds: vessels or containers (vase, cup, basket); natural objects (flowers, fruit); flat objects (book, tray, table-top). The basket, being crudely manufactured of natural materials, stands somewhere between a natural and a man-made object.

2. Smaller objects are principally of two kinds: roughly spherical, self-enclosed, weighty (fruit); delicate, fragile, and open (cup, flowers). The peeled orange on the tray is intermediary between open, hollow and solid, massive objects.

3. The color scheme is divided by an imaginary diagonal line running from the upper left-hand to the lower right-hand corner of the painting. Below and to the left of that line, colors are generally warm, dark, more earthy (fruit, basket, table, tray). Above and to the right of that line, the colors are cooler (book, vase, flowers, background).

4. Despite the rough color division described above, there are subtle gradations of color--emergings into prominence and fadings-away--that move counter-clockwise in a somewhat

circular pattern. Yellow and orange colors appear and are concentrated in the fruit basket, are carried through the fruit on table and tray, and fade out in the trace of gold on the rim of cup and saucer. White begins to appear on the inside of the orange peel, is strongest in the cup, is strong still on the side of the book, reappears sporadically in the flowers and the highlights on the vase. Blue has its largest area in the book cover but is at its most striking in the vase; it then disappears in the shadows of the leaves. The latter, of course, introduce green, which is repeated in the one leaf tucked between the fruit and echoed, more faintly, in two of the apples and pears.

5. The most isolated object is the vase with flowers. It neither overlaps nor is overlapped by any other form. Still, it is integrated with the overall design in a number of ways. A triangle, in terms of similarity of shape, is formed by the most prominent of the flowers, the cup to the right, and the peeled orange to the left. A line suggested by color extends from the two lightest flowers to the cup, another through the pink and red flowers to the red apple on the right within the basket. Two other color relationships are formed by the blue of the vase and the blue of the book, and the green of the leaves and the green in the basket.

6. The overall design subtly comes alive through a number of criss-crossing diagonals and the consequent absence of strong horizontals and verticals. How, it might be asked, would the composition change if a) the table top paralleled the picture

frame, and b) the orange on the tray were moved slightly to the right so as to form a vertical axis with the vase?

7. Though still lifes generally lack drama and tension, a note of tension is introduced by the tray projecting perilously beyond the table surface.

The Human Figure

After this analysis of a still life, the teacher might introduce the human figure--as subject matter that painters of all ages like to represent. The slides and reproductions projected should be prefaced by some remarks about the relationship between subject matter--what the picture represents--and the purely aesthetic or formal properties, the "how" of the presenting.

Perhaps the easiest distinction to make is that between subject matter and content. Subject matter is what the painting displays: an inventory of the figures and objects, or a type of scene and setting. Content, on the other hand, embraces the qualities that make the subject matter appear in a distinctive and often startingly unexpected light--how the figures are characterized and, in the case of some complex representational paintings, how the work is to be interpreted.

The following three considerations are helpful, though they are by no means precise:

1) All paintings, even totally nonobjective ones, have a distinctive overall quality or tone; that is, having noted all the various qualities that

belong to all of its component parts, one usually becomes aware of a quality, though perhaps not a definable one, that belongs to the whole but not necessarily to all or any of its parts. We can, for example, easily think of abstract paintings that are gloomy or joyous.

2) Most figurative or representational paintings also have a content which may be at variance with its subject matter. It is difficult to make this clear in connection with still lifes since they are for the most part formal exercises. But Magritte in his The Listening Chamber manages to make an apple into an oppressive, menacing thing. An apple is the subject matter; its menace, the content. Bonnard's Le Compôtier Blanc has a subject matter--fruit that is bland and almost unrecognizable; yet the content is "juiciness" because of the fruity colors used elsewhere in the painting.

3) With representational paintings, especially those containing human figures, determination of content may involve a more complex process we can call an interpretation. (Sometimes we call the determination of content arrived at via interpretation the "meaning" of the work.) Students can be shown works which show what interpretation is, and when it is appropriately undertaken.

Suggested Slides

The following works, or a suitable selection of the teacher's own choice that builds on the still life viewing the student has done, should be presented fairly rapidly and with only minimal commentary. The paintings are selected to depict attitudes toward eating and drinking for physical survival and, under more prosperous conditions, toward food and drink for sheer enjoyment.

1. The subject matter of the following four paintings has to do with the preparation of meals. In the paintings the human figure moves from being an adjunct to what is basically a still life to center-stage prominence.

a. V. Campi (1536-91), The Fruit Vendor. Milan, Breva.

b. P. Aertsen (1508/9-75), Kitchen Scene. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst.

c. Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin, Home from the Market, ca. 1738. Paris, Louvre.

d. Diego Velazquez, Old Women Cooking Eggs, 1618. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

This (d.) is the first painting showing a single figure, a peasant, eating alone simply to satisfy his hunger.

2. The subject of peasants at their meals became a favorite with genre painters. Often it served mainly to present picturesque peasant types, as with

a. Louis LeNain, Peasants at Supper, 1641. The Louvre, Paris.

b. Vincent VanGogh, The Potato Eaters, 1885. Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum. In this and in the next work, the emphasis is on the solemnity and gratitude of those who do not take their meals for granted.

c. C. deGroux, Grace before the Meal, 1874. Budapest, National Museum.

d. Annibale Carraci, The Bean Eater, ca. 1585. Rome, Galleria Colonna.

(In d., a single figure eats alone to satisfy his hunger.)

3. Even more popular was the theme of meals and merry-making, people enjoying both food and drink and each other's company.

a. Jacob Jordaens, The King Drinks, 1638. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

b. Jan Steen, Merry Family, 1668. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

c. Jan Steen, The Inn Garden. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.

d. P. A. Renoir, The Luncheon of the Boating Party, 1881. Washington, D.C., Phillips Collection.

4. Mealtime is also an occasion when children receive special attention and instruction.

a. F. Boucher (1703-70), Le Déjeuner. Paris, Louvre.

b. Chardin, Benediction, 1740. Paris, Louvre.

5. The need and liking for eating and feasting lend themselves easily to moralizing and satire.

a. H. Bosch (c. 1450-1516), Gula (Gluttony), from The Seven Deadly Sins, painted table board. Madrid, Prado.

b. Peter Brueghel, The Land of Cockaigne, 1567. Munich, Bayerische Stattsgemaldesammlung. Ostensibly an illustration of a popular fable (subject matter), the content of this work undoubtedly is gluttony and self-indulgence.

c. Jean LeClerc, Memento Mori, 1615-20. The Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, New Orleans. The title supplies the interpretation

6. Meals can be ceremonialized into banquets--great and often stately events. Painters have left us records of such affairs, sometimes complete with recognizable portraits of the principal figures.

   a. Limbourg Brothers. January page, Book of Hours (Les Très Riches Heures) of the Duke of Berry, 1416. Illumination. Museé Condé, Chantilly (fol. IV). (The warlike scene in the background is a tapestry).

   b. Paolo Veronese, Marriage at Cana, 1590. Louvre, Paris. While ostensibly a religious work, it is very much a portrayal of a Ventian gala event.

   c. Frans Hals. Banquet of the Officers of the Guild of Archers of St. George of Haarlem, 1639. Haarlem, Holland, Frans Hals Museum.

   d. Anonymous artist, Banquet in Casa Nana, Venice, 1755. Venice, Museo Corre.

7. Some modern works offer a stark contrast to the scenes viewed thus far.

   a. Edward Hopper, Nighthawks, 1942. The Art Institute of Chicago. In this cold and aseptic looking all-night restaurant, lonely people drink coffee.

   b. Edward Kienholz, The Beanery, 1965. Stedeljik Museum, Amsterdam. People crowd around this lunchcounter, yet there is none of the conviviality and relaxed spirit seen in earlier paintings. The figures are faceless, alienated, anonymous.

8. Episodes in the Old and New Testaments that unite the principals around a table have challenged many artists.

   a. Hieronymous Bosch (c. 1450-1516), Marriage at Cana, Rotterdam, Musée Boymans.

   b. Leonardo DaVinci, Last Supper, 1495-98. Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan.

   c. Caravaggio, Christ at Emmaus, c. 1598. The National Gallery, London.

9. As an extension of the last theme, students might look at several depictions of the same scene.

a. Leonardo Da Vinci, Last Supper, Milan.

b. Andrea Del Castagno, Last Supper, c. 1445-50. S. Aprollonia, Florence.

c. Tintoretto, Last Supper, 1592-94, San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice.

d. Salvador Dali, The Last Supper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Discussion. All four works, however, should be examined in terms of 1) the scene represented; 2) space; 3) lighting; 4) treatment of figures; 5) emphasis; 6) content. (The Dali painting by the way, attracts large crowds at the National Gallery and shocks the sensibilities of many viewers. Why?)

Sample Comparison of Castagno's and Leonardo's Last Supper

1. Both works depict that moment during the Last Supper when Jesus prophesies his betrayal.

2. Both works are murals on the walls of refectories, i.e., dining halls. Both give the illusion of being architectural extensions of these halls. In the Castagno, however, the extension is a beautiful pavilion of little depth. Vision is arrested by the strong elements that parallel the picture plane (especially the table and the vividly patterned marble insets in the wall). In the Leonardo, the dining hall is more austere, but it displays the painter's mastery of the science of spatial organization. Vanishing lines guide the eye

toward the figure of Christ on whom they seem to converge. Thus the formal elements of the composition also reinforce the thematic emphasis.

3. In both works the lighting is even and natural. The light lends volume and plasticity to the figures but avoids strong contrasts.

4. Most interesting are the differences in the placement and characterization of the figures. In the Castagno, the figures are presented in a row, all but one departing little from a rigidly upright position. The figures have a hard, sculptural quality which underscores their frieze-like arrangement. In the Leonardo, the figures compose themselves in four groups of three, two to either side of Christ. One discovers more interaction between them, and most importantly, a great diversity of individual response. Though clearly drawn and isolable, these figures are not nearly so detached--both pictorially and psychologically--as those in the Castagno.

5. Emphasis in a painting of this subject would necessarily fall on the figure of Christ. In the Leonardo this is obviously the case. Jesus is at the center, framed by the lighted window area, at the apex of a triangle. The character of secondary interest, Judas (the one upsetting the salt cellar), is not accentuated nearly so much as he is in the Castagno. He is visibly set apart--on our side of the barrier formed by the table, deprived of a halo, and somewhat larger in scale. The chief device for

drawing the eye to the figure of Christ is the lively marble pattern above it.

6. Because of the solemn, relief-like character that the Last Supper scene assumes in the Castagno, the content can be interpreted as signifying the timeless significance of the event. A subsidiary meaning, because of the prominent Judas figure, would be the loathesomeness of betrayal. (Dante puts traitors with Satan, in the very pit of the Inferno.) Leonardo, because of the striking rendering of psychological differences of expression, gives us the human significance of the event i.e., the shock and disbelief at the discovery of evil.

Sample Analysis: Tintoretto

Tintoretto's version of the Last Supper is different in many ways.

1. The painting represents the moment when Jesus offers the bread and wine as signs of his own sacrificial redemption.

2. The setting is more like a rustic inn than a banquet hall. The meal in progress appears less formal. Space is much more open than in other works. The exaggerated parallels of the table and floor lead to an indefinite point beyond the picture. Thus the viewer's attention is pulled into the picture with a rush but is then brought forward again, attracted by the larger figures in the foreground.

3. The illumination is almost melodramatic, emanating from sources both natural (the lamp) and supernatural (the

luminosity surrounding the Christ figure). Light falls strongly and unevenly on the figures, creating vivid contrasts.

4. Figures are greater in number and, owing to the deep picture space, of many gradations of size. But even the larger figures are less isolable. This is due to the tendency of the eye to move swiftly across the figures, led on by the strongly lighted areas and contrasting colors.

5. Emphasis on the principal figure is created solely by light, that is, the radiance issuing from Christ.

6. The main effect of the picture is one of involvement and excitement (created by the qualities of spatial movement, lighting, and strong color contrasts) as well as mystery because of the dark, shadowy areas and the angelic host above, taking shape miraculously in the smoke from the oil lamp). The content of this picture, therefore, is a mystical rapture appropriate to the religious meaning of this moment.

The Dali rendition, which, as indicated above, attracts thousands of viewers every year in the National Gallery of Art, is extremely provocative. Students will need little prompting.

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Session (s)

The general objective of this hour (or hours) is to explore the question of whether the visual arts lead students to humanistic understanding and insight, and if so, what forms such understanding might take. (The underlying assumption in this unit as in others, is that humanistic understanding is essential to success in the quest for selfhood).

A first task might be to test students' grasp of what humanistic understanding is and how it can serve them. For example, they might be asked what people are doing when they say they are "trying to find themselves."

Some try to find their "real selves" through introspection only to find themselves gazing into a void. Mature people recognize that the self can be fully understood only in its relationships to others. They are willing to extend vaguely humanitarian sympathies to everyone--all over the globe, as it were. This can be just an excuse for self-indulgence--as shallow as the Coca-Cola commercial showing young people of all races in an idyllic setting singing lustily about buying the whole world a "coke," as if sipping coca-cola were an ersatz Eucharistic celebration--or it can be the dedication and authentic humanism of an Albert Schweitzer.

Concern for the past has always been essential to the meaning of "humanistic" and "the humanities". Through the art of painting we see the past and recognize that certain concerns for the human estate are perennial. Paintings, in addition to being artifacts designed for aesthetic experience, are also historical, or human, documents. They document concerns with and questions about human values.

The teacher must be careful that this shift in emphasis does not confuse the student and wipe out the achievement of the preceding class hours. Those hours were devoted to developing the attitude proper to the aesthetic experience and the analytic and interpretive skills needed to apprehend the full aesthetic value of paintings. Nonetheless, in a course of this kind, the teacher must go beyond purely aesthetic and technical analyses to call attention to broad humanistic considerations. For that matter, even though skills of analysis and humanistic understanding can be treated separately, they have points of contact in the actual experience of works of art. Erwin Panofsky touches on these matters eloquently in his essay "Art as a Humanistic Discipline." The "content" of art, he tells us, is the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion--all this unconsciously qualified by one personality and condensed into one work.

For the sake of a sample analysis, we can consider the two principal works which have as their theme feasting and banqueting. The first portion of the discussion might center on

> Peter Brueghel, the Elder (ca. 1515-69) The Peasant Wedding. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

First, students should be asked briefly to analyze and describe the elements of the painting, as was done earlier in the unit. They ought to notice, for example, a) the relative flatness of the figures; b) the unifying function performed by color, especially red.

Sample Analysis: Brueghel the Elder

Students should be asked what they can "learn" merely by looking at this picture(and without being given much background information about it.) The two most obvious things are: 1) what

Dutch peasants looked like in the mid-16th century; 2) what in the middle of the 16th century the taste in pictures was like.

But what can this painting tell us about its time and all times? (Here, of course, outside knowledge is helpful.) The work is in a tradition called genre painting, and is, in fact, an early example of it. Genre painters take objects of everyday life, or common people engaged in everyday activities, as their subject matter.

Brueghel was one of the most innovative artists in art history, and that not only because of his being one of the first genre painters. (He was also a great deal more independent than artists before him had been since he rarely had to rely on commissions.)

The question arises as to whether The Peasant Wedding suggests any particular attitude toward its characters. The figures are certainly not idealized or sentimentalized (as they would be some centuries later in Romantic depictions--Millet's, for example--of stalwart tillers of the soil). These people are set down in a rather matter-of-fact way. But perhaps not quite so. In this rather sedate gathering there is discernible, a leaning toward the unflattering, as in the plain, smug bride (in front of the green wall-hanging).

This matter-of-fact, real-life quality is much more pronounced in another painting by Brueghel which is almost a companion piece to this one:

The Peasant Dance, Vienna, Kusthistorisches Museum.

These peasants are certainly a boisterous and not altogether lovely lot. They are neither caricatured nor are they patronized. Yet there is an undeniable emphasis on their uncouthness. But we must not rush to conclusions about Brueghel's "view of human nature." Human nature" is a slippery and vague concept, and only aspects of it can be depicted, and then only with difficulty. Nonetheless, when we see a preference for a certain rendering of the human figure throughout an artist's entire career, we can take it as suggestive of what the artist saw as "typical," i.e., of a class, a group, a nation.

One structural feature of The Peasant Wedding that must be noted is that the viewer's access is gained to the scene across a large makeshift tray (a door taken off its hinges and red with dinner plates). The entire left corner is given over drinking vessels.

Brueghel's stress on food and drink recalls The Land of Cockaigne (where the arrangement of pies on the roof closely resemble the plates on the tray). Remember that we said of this work that its content was human gluttony and self-indulgence. Now we can go even further and claim that the artist acribes these traits to all mankind--the knight, the peasant, and the scribe--and suggests that these human weaknesses are ineradicable.

At a more sophisticated level of interpretation, we can point to a design motif frequently used by Brueghel: wheel-like and circular shapes which symbolize repetition, recurrence, lack of change. In The Peasant Dance the three figures are disposed as the spokes of a wheel; the table above them is suggestive of a wheel; and circular forms abound. In short, if this work does, indeed, say something about human nature, it does so on both a literal as well as a formal level. (Students may have learned in an earlier unit that there are similar levels of interpretation in literature. A New Testament parable tells a simple story while suggesting that the story has broader applications.)

To return to The Peasant Wedding: a feature this work has in common with several other of Brueghel's paintings should be noted--uncertainty regarding the principal figures. This is a wedding scene. But who is the bridegroom? Nobody has been able to say. Even the bride, though she is identifiable, remains in the background. Does it matter who is a bride or who is a bridegroom? What matters is that people will marry and be given in marriage, while human nature remains the same. The dancers change but the dance remains.

Sample Analysis: Christ Carrying the Cross, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

Students should also be made aware that paintings, like poems, plays, and novels, contain searing indictments of human foibles and man's inhumanity. (Sometimes the allusions in the work are topical--which means that students must bring knowledge with them to the work. Thus to appreciate Picasso's Guernica, the student must know 1) something about the artist's political leanings, and 2) details of the attack by Fascist planes on Guernica during the Spanish Civil War.)

This work by Brueghel can also be used to show how painting concerns itself with humane values. Students should be encouraged, first, to identify three characteristics of Brueghel's art as exemplified in this work. They are as follows:

1. The main figure, Christ stumbling under the weight of the cross, is nearly lost in the crowd, though he is at the center of the picture.

2. The crowd teems with crude, jostling types of humanity, eagerly anticipating the spectacle of an execution.

3. Again there are the wheel-like and circular shapes to indicate that what goes on here is about what one should expect of any crowd at any time. Notice, for example, the circle formed by the early arrivals repeated by several torture wheels on their poles (with some fragments of the last victim still attaching); the improbably situated--and therefore symbolical--windmill, going round and round on its circular platform.

Students' attention should also be directed to the group in the right foreground, i.e., Mary, St. John, and the mourning women. They are the only ones showing sorrow, and they are decidedly not part of the unfolding scene. (In dress and attitude they closely resemble Flemish paintings of a century earlier, which only further accentuates the behavior of the mindless mob.)

Students should now be asked how, after considering the elements just pointed out, they would interpret the painting.

The teacher should withhold temporarily one piece of historical information: the soldiers who are to keep order and see that the crucifixions come off as scheduled wear the red coats of the Spanish forces that occupied the Low Lands in Brueghel's day.

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D. Alternative Strategy

The scheme just elaborated for this unit easily lends itself to the development of other themes, though any treatment should begin with the familiar and basic and then elaborate man's relationship to it. Another such theme might be "Man and His Implements," the latter being understood as simple objects of daily use, tools of trade, and finally depictions of the use of implements in work situations.

Session

Simple objects, tools, instruments would be shown, followed by a series of still lifes featuring such objects. Possible selections are the following:

Still Life, wall painting from the House of Julia Felix, Pompeii, Second Style, 1st century B.C. - early 1st century A.D. National Museum, Naples.

Vincenzo DaVerona, Cupboard and Niche with Objects, ca. 1480. Wood Inlay, Louvre, Paris.

Gotthardt DeWedig, Still Life by Candlelight, ca. 1630. Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt.

Giuseppe Arcimboldo, The Librarian, ca. 1580.

Banguin, The Five Senses, ca. 1630. Louvre, Paris.

F. de Zurburan (1598-1664), Still Life. Madrid, Prado.

Harmen van Steenwyck, Vanitas, 17th century. Leiden, Stedelijk Museum.

E. Baschenis (1617-77), Still Life with Musical Instruments. Bergamo, Italy, Galleria dell' Accademia Carrara.

W. Vaillart, Board with Letters, 1658. Dresden, Gemaldegalerie.

J. B. Simeon Chardin (1699-1779), Still Life with Pipe. Paris, Louvre.

William M. Harnett (1848-92), Mortality and Immortality. Roland P. Murdock Collection, Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, Kansas.

Vincent Van Gogh, The Artist's Chair, 1888. The Tate Gallery, London.

Pablo Picasso, Green Still Life, 1914. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Juan Gris, Guitar with Sheet Music, 1926. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Saidenberg, New York.

G. Morandi (1890-1964), Still Life. Rome, Collection Albonetti.

Pierre Roy, Metric System, ca. 1933. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.

Rene Magritte, Personal Values, 1952. Collection Harry Torczyner, New York.

Andy Warhol, Brillo Boxes, 1964. Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

Session(s)

The strategy remains the same. The artist, for example, shows people at work using common tools:

Egyptian Craftsmen at Work, ca. 1400 B.C. Wall painting. Tomb of the Sculptors Nebamun and Ipuki, Thebes.

The Eucharides Painter, *Cobbler at Work*, pelike, Attic, ca. 510 B.C. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The Biadaiolo Illuminator, *Grain Merchant's Shop*, 14th century. Illumination. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana (Ms. Tempi 3, fol. 3r).

The Limbourg Brothers, *October*, *Book of Hours of the Duke of Berry*, 1416. Musee Conde, Chantilly (fol. IV).

Jan Van Eyck, *St. Jerome in His Study*, ca. 1432-41. The Detroit Institute of Art.

Petrus Christus, *St. Eligius*, 1449. Collection Robert Lehman, New York.

Quentin Metsys (1465/6-1430), *The Money Changer and His Wife*, Paris, Louvre.

Diego Velazquez, *The Servant*, ca. 1618-22. Chicago, Art Institute.

Velazquez, *The Water Seller of Seville*, ca. 1619. The Wellington Museum, London.

Jan Vermeer, *The Artist in His Studio*, ca. 1665-70. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Jean Antoine Watteau, *The Signboard of the Artdealer Gersaint*, 1720. West Berlin, Staatliche Museen.

Gustave Courbet, *The Stone Breakers*, 1849. State Picture Gallery, Dresden (destroyed).

G. Courbet, *Women Winnowing Corn*, 1853-54. Nantes, France, Musee des Beaux-Arts.

J. F. Millet, *The Washerwoman*, ca. 1861. Paris, Louvre.

Edgar Degas, *The Cotton Broker's Office in New Orleans*, 1873. Musee des Beaux-Arts, Pau.

George Tooker, *Government Bureau*, 1956. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Session(s)

Discussion could center on the artist conscious of himself as a man with a mission.

Focus could be one or several of 19th-century paintings by Courbet, Millet, Daumier, depicting simple people engaged in toilsome labor.

Students can be shown how artists become members of movements--Realism or Romanticism--condemn the past or present, and make themselves the conscience of humanity.

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E. Reading Suggestions

1. George Boas and Harold Holmes Wrenn, What Is A Picture? (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964).

A lucid introduction to the art of painting, organized around problems and themes.

2. Kenneth Clark, Civilisation (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969).

A very readable exploration of history and culture from the fall of the Roman Empire to the present day, dealing with a wide range of ideas and using hundreds of well chosen examples from the visual arts.

3. F. David Martin and Lee A. Jacobus, The Humanities Through the Arts (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975).

A systematic attempt to employ the fine arts to get at humanistic consideration.

4. Harold Osborne, The Art of Appreciation (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).

Though dealing with the nature of art appreciation in general, the book concentrates on the visual arts. The discussion of several important problems in aesthetics and art criticism is well within the comprehension of the average reader.

5. Erwin Panofsky, Meaning in the Visual Arts (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company; Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955).

Of particular interest is the Introduction, "The History of Art As a Humanistic Discipline."

6. Joshua C. Taylor, Learning to Look - A Handbook for the Visual Arts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

A brief and eminently sensible approach to the visual arts.

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F. Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. Art and Perception: Learning to See. Visual elements are pointed out as the film explores familiar environments; includes paintings which illustrate these visual inspirations. Color. 17 minutes.

2. Art Appreciation: Enjoying Paintings. Illustrates what artists sought to convey and how they manipulated their materials to do so. Color. 14 minutes.

3. The Dulle Griet (Brueghel and the Follies of Men--II). Reveals man's conflict with society and nature and the confrontation between death and the will to live. Color. 19 minutes.

4. Painting: A Visual Record (The Humanities Series). Split-screen technique; shows how painting reflects the condition of the world, how its form and function are determined by historical forces. Color. 19 minutes.

5. What Is A Painting? John Canaday, art editor of the New York Times, compares several paintings in order to arrive at a definition of painting. Color. 22 minutes.

6. Man and His Art, a series of six videotapes produced by the City Colleges of Chicago in cooperation with the Art Institute of Chicago, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Field Foundation of Illinois; especially Program #2, "Style is the Man and His Work"; Program #4, "Reflections of Reality"; Program #5, "Contemporary - The Painter's Eye." Videotapes and videocassettes available for purchase or lease from the Great Plains Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501 .

V. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: MUSIC

...the ideal listener is both inside and outside the music at the same moment, judging it and enjoying it, wishing it would go one way and watching it go another--almost like the composer at the moment he composes it... A subjective and objective attitude is implied in both creating and listening to music.

What the [listener] should strive for, then, is a more active kind of listening...not someone who is just listening, but someone who is listening for something.

Aaron Copland

V. DEVELOPING CRITICAL AWARENESS: MUSIC

Overview

This unit is based on the same premise as the others in this section, viz. music contributes significantly to humanistic education understood as the enrichment and extension of the individual's self. The contribution to self-cultivation which instruction in the proper appreciation of musical aesthetic objects can make occurs under the rubrics set forth below as objectives.

Teaching Objectives

1. To help the student develop listening skills by recognizing the element of music.
2. To identify the three planes on which music can be heard: the sensuous, the formal, and the purely musical.
3. To explain the nature of the purely musical plane of music.
4. To encourage recognition and appreciation of harmonic and contrapuntal music.
5. To develop awareness of musical texture.
6. To develop some awareness of musical styles.

Suggested Student Assignments

Read: Aaron Copland, What to Listen for in Music, rev. ed., esp. Chapter 2.

View Film: American Music: From Folk to Jazz and Pop.

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Contents

A. Introduction: Planes of Musical Listening
B. The Elements of Music
C. Suggestions for Teaching
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

A. Introduction to the Teacher:

Music is primarily an aural experience. To be sure, the professional performing artist, the composer, the amateur instrumentalist, and the singer experience music in other ways. But most people who have any meaningful contact with music will experience it exclusively through their ears.

There is much more to music experience than simply hearing however. Before on can have any kind of genuine "musical" experience, he needs to have some understanding of how musical materials are organized and how music unfolds. This is not to deny the power of music to affect us emotionally at a sub-intellectual level. The sheer sensuous power of music needs no demonstration. The producers of motion pictures and TV commercials use this power to heighten dramatic impact and influence us as consumers.

Yet, to experience music on this sensuous level only can be compared to listening to Dante being read aloud in Italian without knowledge of Italian. The rhythm, cadence, and sound patterns may be of interest and may even engender a response of sorts, but the import of the poetry and its intensity will elude the reader. In short, the sensuous response to the sounds of music, while not an insignificant part of the total musical experience, is not enough.[1]

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[1] For a more extended treatment of this idea and of what follows, the teacher should see Aaron Copland, What to Listen for in Music, Chapter 2.

Moving beyond the sensuous plane of listening requires aural perceptual skills of a sort seldom reinforced in formal education. Listening--as distinguished from hearing--skills are usually minimally developed among students entering community colleges. Even those who consider themselves music lovers (and very few people will state outright that they have no interest in music of any sort) are rarely able to relate to musical experiences much beyond the sensuous level.

The reason for this difficulty is that we are continually being conditioned not to listen attentively to music. The sounds of music float through stores, shops, and factories, into elevators, bars, and restaurants; down hospital corridors. They are inevitable concomitants of every social gathering, supply "background" in films and television programs, and serve as a tool for advertisers. Is it any wonder that Americans cannot abide silence? The result is almost an immunization against serious musical listening.

Prime emphasis of this unit must be on developing new modes of attention to music and the perceptual skills relevant to sustaining such attention. We cannot hope to teach students much about the elements of music or the history of music in a short time. But we can expand the student's awareness of what is going on in musical performance and sharpen her or his sensitivity to what Copland calls the "expressive" and the "sheerly musical" planes of music.

A later unit examines the expressive plane of music. This one will concentrate on the sheerly musical plane. Such a division, of course, is arbitrary and useful only as an instructional device. To show how we experience such planes simultaneously, Copland draws a helpful analogy to the theater:

> In the theater, you are aware of the actors and actresses, costumes and sets, sounds and movement. All these give one the sense that the theater is a pleasant place to be in. They constitute the sensuous plane in our theatrical reactions.
>
> The expressive plane in the theater would be derived from the feeling that you get from what is happening on the stage. You are moved to pity, excitement, or gaiety. It is this general feeling, generated aside from the particular words being spoken, a certain emotional something which exists on the stage, that is analogous to the expressive quality in music.
>
> The plot and plot development is equivalent to our sheerly musical plane. The playwright creates and develops a character in just the same way that a composer creates and develops a theme. According to the degree of your awareness of the way in which the artist in either field handles his material will you become a more intelligent listener.
>
> It is easy enough to see that the theatergoer never is conscious of any of these elements separately. He is aware of them all at the same time. The same is true of music listening. We simultaneously and without thinking listen on all three planes.

After this brief preliminary statement, we can turn our attention to the following considerations in this unit.

1. As Americans, we are continually being conditioned not to listen to music. New modes of attention to music must

therefore precede any heightening of involvement in music listening.

2. Specific listening skills must be developed if we are to follow the unfolding of musical structures. These skills include the following:
   (a) a musical memory,
   (b) the ability to follow two or more musical idea occurring simultaneously,
   (c) the ability to distinguish and identify tone center.
3. Music is shaped by the ensemble for which it is written. A composer writing for a jazz "combo" will select different sorts of musical ideas and deal with them differently than he would if he were writing an opera.
4. Musicians' creative styles are shaped in fact by their cultures. The understanding of these forces enables listeners to recognize the textures and styles of the principal eras by their sounds.

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B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

The first class hour may open with a videotape or film on the elements of music (a special videotape supplement has been produced by Coast Community College; see the Audio-Visual Guide above).

Attention might now be shifted to a consideration of the major musical distinctions to be discussed: the distinction between harmonic and contrapuntal music. Once again, specially prepared tapes amy be used to illustrate the distinction.

It should be pointed out and illustrated that harmonic music is music with one predominant melodic line, with all other parts of the structure being subordinated to provide harmonic support for this melody. Most folk, rock, and "pop" music (with the exception of Dixieland, modern jazz, and much art music) is of this sort--especially from the nineteenth century onward. Examples of harmonic music which may be played in class are

1. Rock music.
2. Stage band music.
3. Rimsky-Korsakov, Scheherezade.
4. Chopin, Waltz in A-Flat Major for Piano.
5. Ravel, Bolero.

Show how contrapuntal music is music with at least two different melodies proceeding simultaneously. Contrapuntal melodies may or may not be accompanied by harmonic support as above. The following are recordings of contrapuntal music that students find appealing and which are easily available:

1. Excerpt from Call Me Madam. This duet is for two contrapuntal voices with harmonic support provided by the orchestra.
2. Dixieland jazz; with several voices supported by harmony from the piano and/or guitar or banjo.
3. Tschaikowsky's 1812 Overture or Marche Slav. At the end of each of these compositions the former Russian national anthem is introduced in simple counterpoint with the melody played alone just before. The last two or three minutes of the piece will suffice to make the point.
4. J.S. Bach, Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring. The organ choral prelude. An example of unharmonized counter-

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Session(s)

An absorbing topic for a class session is musical texture. It can be explored by considering the ways in which the various instruments add to the peculiar texture of music. For this purpose the widely used London Symphony film, Instruments of the Orchestra (1947), or the more recent The Symphony Sound with Henry Lewis (1970), can be shown in class.

Instruments of the Orchestra

The London Symphony Orchestra demonstrates the sound of each orchestral instrument by playing Benjamin Britten's Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell. Sir Malcolm Sargent is both conductor and commentator. This music has also been recorded under the title, The Young People's Guide to the Orchestra. A 1947 production. 20 minutes.

The Symphony Sound with Henry Lewis

The Royal Philharmonic of London plays excerpts from symphonic literature to illustrate historical and stylistic points, the power of the instruments, and of instrumental groupings. Narrated by Henry Lewis, Musical Director of the New Jersey Symphony and Guest Conductor of the Royal. A 1970 production. Color. 27 minutes.

An orchestra makes all sorts of textures possible and contains combinations of harmony, counterpoint, and harmonized counterpoint. As they watch and listen, students should attend to what is going on at any moment. They should be alert to changes occurring.

Each instrument, it should be pointed out, has its own distinct sound, called its timbre (tam-ber). The difference is due to the manner in which the sound is produced.

* * *

Session(s)

Popular Music

Popular music in the United States changes constantly. The excellent educational film described below, too long to show in class, shows this change. Students may be asked to view it in the library screening center.

American Music: From Folk to Jazz and Pop

Traces the development of American jazz from New Orleans in 1900, to St. Louis and Chicago about 1917, to New York in the thirties, and to the rest of the United States and the world in the forties, fifties, and sixties. Also points out the contributions of the square dance, the hoedown, the hillbilly song, the gospel hymn, the funeral march, and the return march after a funeral. Shows the commercialization of jazz and popular music through festivals, radio, television, and sales promotion of records. Includes commentary by Duke Ellington, Richard Rodgers, and jazz expert Billy Taylor. Closes with a sequence in which Tony Bennett works with an orchestra and crew in a recording studio. Educational release, 1967. 50 minutes.

Students can be asked how much more change has taken place since 1967. Can they see how much more accessible early rock (Presley's Blue Suede Shoes, the Beatles' Help!) was than the complex jazz of the period immediately preceding the introduction of these tunes? They might want to conjecture as to why uncomplicated and primitive rock music took over the mainstream of American popular music from jazz and also consider the question as to whether rock has become more complex during the past fifteen years or so (later Beatles, hard rock, acid rock, Blood, Sweat and Tears, others). They should also be encouraged to explain their criteria for evaluating individual performances.

Art Music

Art Music has been evolving over the centuries. Music did exist before 1700, but it was very different from the music one is likely to hear today, so different, in fact, that it has become a specialized interest of scholars and musicologists. Yet it has much charm and appeal when done well and with proper concern for style and authenticity of performance practice.

Non-Western music, entirely outside our musical tradition, is not usually appealing to most Americans, although there has been a considerable increase in interest in Eastern music (particularly Indian music) during the last decade or so. Most of the art music heard in concert halls and elsewhere has been composed since 1700, and the greatest concentration has been upon music composed roughly between 1750 and 1920.

Musical Style - Periods

For the last three centuries five quite different style-periods of music are distinguishable. It is essential to remember that the replacement of one style by another was gradual, and that there have always been atypical composers in all periods. The types of music dominating in each style-period are easy enough to differentiate. Even a novice listener can be successful in identifying them in most cases.

1. Modern (Approximately 1910 - present) This period can usually be said to begin with the early works of Stravinsky, especially the Rite of Spring (listening to a part of this work in class makes an exciting beginning for this section -- perhaps

the opening section and the concluding Sacrificial Dance). As with most periods, music of the modern period may be considered a reaction against the previous period (Late Romantic), in that composers seem to feel that the late Romantics had exhausted the possibilities of the conventional resources of tonal music which had prevailed since about 1600.

Contemporary music is often experimental, employing new tonal systems and developing new ways of using old ones--often harsh in use of dissonance--making much use of percussion instruments and striking rhythmic effects.

2. Late Romantic (Approximately 1860-1910))Music of this period, the culmination of an artistic movement beginning a century earlier, is often expressive of intense emotional states. Composers wrote in highly personal idioms. They used increased chromaticism, rapid key changes (those unfamiliar with these terms should listen to the music and then compare it with the examples of earlier music to grasp the differences), and wrote for larger and larger ensembles. Nationalistic folk music influenced their compositions, and they wrote music with nonmusical connotations called "program music." Music became increasingly complex, more often contrapuntal, and approached the outer limits of the tonal system which had prevailed for nearly 300 years.

3. Early Romantic (Approximately 1800-1860) The beginning of individualism in musical expression was a reaction against the formalism and complexity of the previous era. The music is still largely diatonic (compare the sound with that

of the late romantics), melodic, and easily comprehended. It is subjective, more personal in its expression, and much more distinctive than the style of compositions of earlier times. Composers as a whole had little use for contrapuntal structures, preferring the more accessible single melody line with straightforward harmonic accompaniment. Still, the use of counterpoint and chromatic harmonies increased as the century moved on, particularly in the music of Mendelssohn (counterpoint) and Chopin (chromaticism).

4. Classic (Approximately 1727-1810) The early part of this period is often referred to as Rococo. The Rococo-Classic period started out in opposition to the complexity of the music composed toward the end of the preceding period. Rococo composers wrote simply organized and accessible music with single melodic lines supported by uncomplicated harmonic structures. The music is formal in style and differs from the Romantic period which follows by carefully eschewing any expression of intense emotion. In the highly formalized court life where this music was heard, public expression of emotions was considered the height of bad manners.

The idiom was almost exclusively diatonic, with very little chromaticism. Changes of key were few and were used with great care. Composers later in the Classic period, however--notably Mozart and Haydn--began to introduce more chromaticism, key changes, and counterpoint. They still maintained classic balance of form and suppressed emotional content--with few exceptions--throughout their careers, even as the new tides of

Romanticism began to flow. Early classic Rococo compositions are rarely performed. They tend to sound uninteresting to ears familiar with the more dramatic music of later periods. However, the music of the two giants of the classical period, Haydn and Mozart, are still heard often.

5. Baroque (Approximately 1600-1750) While this period opens a century earlier than the period suggested above, Baroque compositions before 1700 are rarely performed. Most of the early Baroque composers wrote largely, or even exclusively, for the church.

The high Baroque, ending in the middle of the eighteenth century, overlapped by nearly thirty years the beginnings of classicism, dominated by J.S. Bach and G.F. Handel. In fact, the deaths of these two composers, just six years apart, mark the end of the period for musicologists. Their music is largely contrapuntal, with some concern for the harmonic implications of the counterpoint. It is highly ornate, mostly diatonic, although influenced more by rapid changes of key than was true of the Rococo composers. The chromaticism also was not so severe.

This kind of music tends to have an archaic sound to contemporary ears, because its roots are contrapuntal, not harmonic. Counterpoint in later music is usually founded on a harmonic base. Baroque music is less harmonic, partly because of its historical distance from us. The composers were also writing for the more primitive forms of their instruments which sounded somewhat different from ours. Since instrumental music, as distinct from vocal music, was a relatively new concept, composers did not have the facility in instrumentation or the art of writing effectively for groups of instruments which have evolved since then. They combined instruments in particular groupings, and wrote for these instruments differently than we would write for them today. Attempts to authenticate these early performances, therefore, even with recreations of old instruments, sound strange to contemporary ears. Stranger yet are the performances presented by those who are not familiar with performance practices prevalent in the eighteenth century and who try to modernize them.

Representative musical works which may be played in class to illustrate the styles described above are:

1. Modern: Stravinsky, Rite of Spring, Sacrificial Dance
2. Late Romantic: Wagner, Ride of the Valkyries (operatic version, not an orchestral transcription)
3. Early Romantic: Schubert, The Erlkönig (with handout copy of the text of the song in translation)
4. Classic: Haydn, Symphony No. 88, last movement
5. Baroque: Bach, Second Brandenburg Concerto, first movement

Obviously, the purpose in playing portions from these works is to suggest musical styles. Analysis of form would presuppose a good deal of time and musical knowhow.

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D. Reading Suggestions

1. Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958).

Excellent for analysis of musical elements, structure and texture in music, and musical meaning. Regarding the meanings of structure and texture, Beardsley writes: "If the composition is a short melody, it will be in order to call the relations between its main clauses its structure; if the melody occurs in the course of the finale of a piano concerto, then relative to the whole movement the relations between its clauses are part of the texture." (p. 178)

2. F. David Martin and Lee A. Jacobus, The Humanities Through the Arts (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975).

Chapter on music examines the referential capacity of music, musical structures, and musical styles with "perception keys" on what to listen for in various musical styles. Also see references in Unit XIV.

3. Richard L. Wink and Lois G. Williams, Invitation to Listening (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1922).

A good introductory text organized around such conventional topics as elements, tones, repetition, form, texture, movement, with a chapter on style.

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E. Audio-Visual Suggestions

Films:

1. The Bolero Color 28 minutes
2. Forms of Music: Instrumental Color 16 minutes
3. The Infinite Variety of Music--Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in New York. 50 minutes
4. The Symphony Sound with Henry Lewis Color 27 minutes
5. Bernstein on Beethoven: Ode to Joy from the Ninth Symphony Color 27 minutes.
6. Developing Critical Awareness, specially produced by Coast Community College to accompany this unit. 24 minutes. For further information, write Coast Community College, 1370 Adams Avenue, Coasta Mesa, California 92626.
7. American Music: From Folk to Jazz and Pop, 1967. 50 minutes

VI. FORM AND MEANING IN THE ARTS

...the subject matter of all the arts is a unity, even though the expressive means and the relative powers of the several arts differ. Music cannot paint, nor literature yield colors, nor architecture have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Yet as time goes on and techniques keep pace with desires, the legitimate analogies multiply. There is "tone color" in music...there is "rhythm" in painting, and "dissonance" in architecture...there is, long has been, word music in poetry and prose, there is sculpture marked with pictorial effects, and painting full of plastic sensations. All of these arts, moreover, may be associated with one another's nominal "subjects" and may be rightly characterized as dramatic, serene, gay, sinister--as well as by a thousand other qualities.

Jacques Bar[illegible]

...meaning arises, in the making of art, from three sources--out of life subject-matters, from the materials of the arts, and from both of these as transformed within the work into a new systematic emergent artistic unity.... The work of arts, as an aesthetic *system*...comes through the agency of the artist, to possess a new, *wholly* internal aesthetically systematical meaning, a meaning which is *sui generis*. It is this which is presented to us for appreciation.

L.A. Reid

Thematic variation, balance, and evolution remain...the fundamental irreducible types of aesthetic unity.

D.H. Parker

VI. FORM AND MEANING IN THE ARTS

Overview

This unit provides additional practice in recognizing the elements and relations which give works of art their expressive power and meaning. After raising the question as to whether or not music can "mean" something, the unit examines how movement and tension are realized in the visual arts and music and how words and music are joined in song. The distinctiveness of each art form is stressed and the family resemblances among the arts are noted.

Teacher Objectives

1. To provide additional practice in recognizing the elements of art, with special reference to the relations between form and meaning.

2. To stress the distinctiveness of each art form, as well as some common principles of organization.

3. To investigate the claim that music can "mean" something.

Assignments

(There need be no special reading assignments for this unit. Students should review their notes from the previous four units and give some thought to how a given effect or quality--say, serenity, frenzy, or expansiveness--may be achieved in each of the arts. A teacher may want to distribute B below, "The Principles of Form", to the class at the start of the unit.)

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Contents of Unit

A. Introduction: Form and Meaning
B. The Principles of Form
C. Suggestions for Teaching
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions
F. Appendices: Alternative Topics
    1. Rembrandt, Delacroix, and Renoir: A Comparison
    2. The Realization of Open Space and Great Scale in the Arts
    3. Form and Expression in Painting
    4. Literature and Music
    5. Sound Films and Slide-Tape Operas

6. A Color Analysis of Ralph Ellison's *King of the Bingo Game*
7. Study Guide for James Joyce's *The Dead*

A. Introduction: Form and Meaning

One of the advantages of teaching a humanities course organized like this is the opportunity afforded to see not only how each art form is distinctive and self-contained, but also how the arts have elements in common. Accordingly, this unit provides some practice in perceiving (a)the reactions between the formal organization of musical elements and musical "meaning," insofar, that is, as music can be said to mean something; (b)the similarity of formal elements in painting and music; and (c)the relations of words and music in song. The unit places emphasis on what causes certain aesthetic effects, an emphasis that directs attention to a work's formal organization of elements.

As indicated above, "The Principles of Form" (below) might be reproduced and distributed to students for general background reading.

* * *

B. The Principles of Form

When we speak of the "elements" or "aspects" of a work of art, we are usually referring to such things as *line*, *color*, *diction*, *tone*, *meter*, *shape*, and so on. Whenever we speak of the relationships that exist among these elements and the work in its entirety, we are speaking of *form*. A chair and a table may both be composed of the same elements: wood, nails, glue, etc. But their elements are arranged differently as determined by the object's distinctive function (or purpose) so that one has the form of a chair, the other, the form of a table.

In trying to understand better the sources of the aesthetic value of works of art, critics and philosophers have isolated several principles of form. Their terminology varies, but they are in agreement on basic principles. This section attempts to indicate what these principles are and how they are employed in criticism.

Unity

Unity is a basic formal principle in criticism. For that matter, unity is basic to effective communication. When a critic holds that a given work is unified organically, he is claiming that without each element it would not be what it is. Or better yet, the relative "position" of each element in the work is so important that if even one element were changed, the overall meaning of the work would also change.

The desire to make a work "all of a piece" is what guides the filmmaker, for example, in editing his film. In editing a film, frames may be cropped and individual scenes shortened, purposefully juxtaposed with others, provided with musical accompaniment, or even eliminated altogether.

Many students will have seen the film American Graffiti by George Lucas, a highly unified film. Try to imagine it minus one element: the musical soundtrack of popular songs from the 1950s and early 1960s. Without the witty commentary that the lyrics of these songs provide for their accompanying scenes, the satirical purport of the film would be lost. These cinematic images need the songs, for without the songs they would simply be different images.

Lest there be misunderstanding about unity, it should be noted that unity is found in multiplicity. Santayana in The Sense of Beauty tells us that unity cannot be absolute and be a form. A form is an aggregation; it must have elements, and the manner in which the elements are combined constitutes the character of the form.

Theme

Whenever we can locate one or more than one dominant element in a work of art, we have located a theme. To have located a theme is to have found a part of the work that represents the whole--one that embodies, so to speak, the whole in miniature. The theme of a painting might be embodied in a pre-eminent shape or pattern of a musical composition or figure (e.g. the famous opening of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5); of a novel or play, a governing idea, (e.g. the notion of revenge in Hamlet or in the Elizabethan tragedies classified as "revenge tragedies.")

A repeated theme is called a motif. Wagner, for example, in his operas associates certain musical figures with certain characters and situations. The appearance onstage of the god Wotan calls up a certain musical theme--or motif; another theme recalls the passion of Tristan and Isolde.

Thematic Variation

Thematic variation, a third formal principle, derives from the second, just as the second can, in an important sense, be derived from the first. Thematic variation takes place in many ways.

In music, for example, a given theme may be repeated (recurrence), played off against a second theme (variation), shifted to another key (transposition), or even reversed so that the last note of the thematic melody becomes the first note of the new melody and so on (inversion). We can recognize thematic variation most readily in music - (a class listening to a recording of Rachmaninoff's *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* will do the trick) - but it also is a device employed in the other arts as well.

Balance

Balance is another formal feature to be noted. We say a work of art is "balanced" when one element of a group of elements is contrasted or opposed to one or more other elements of equal value. Thus when a critic claims that a given work is balanced, he is not only claiming that there is contrast or opposition in the work, but also that the elements are contrasted or opposed in some necessary way. The opposing elements must work together to create a fused effect that is unique to the particular opposition of elements and not simply reducible to one element "plus" another. In looking at a painting we generally look for balance along three lines: the horizontal, the perpendicular, and the diagonal. We look for balance both in color and in shape, as revealed in kinds of questions often asked students by their instructors; e.g.:

> Is the small figure in the foreground balanced by the mountain in the distance?
>
> Does the blue of the stream successfully balance the yellow of the sun?

And in some instances we speak of qualitatively different elements balancing each other -- when we look, for example, at a photograph in which a large tree (out of focus, in the foreground) may be balanced by a vivdly colored and sharply focused bird in the background.

Evolution

The last category of form we shall consider can be called "evolution". Evolution, as a formal principle, does not apply wherever the beginning, middle, and end of a plot are not inextricably related. If a novel is constructed in this way, we say it is episodic -- and usually think it faulty because there is no line of development or evolution.

At times a lack of evolution is not a flaw. Mozart's Eine Kleine Nacht Musik -- the title of which (A Little Serenade) gives a clue to its nature -- does not suffer because there is no beginning which evolves into a middle. Mix the movements up and an experienced music lover will not be too upset, for there is no great interdependency among them. It is not a work which displays formal evolution to any great degree.

But play the movements of Mozart's Symphony No. 40 out of order and you simply destroy the value of the work. In this symphony, the seeds of subsequent elements are contained in the earlier ones and we have a clear sense of its overall development and resolution.[1]

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C. Suggestions for Teaching

First Session(s)

A rewarding topic is the relationship of form and meaning in music, more specifically, how it is that the formal elements of music can result in something that some people call "meaning."

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[1] See DeWitt H. Parker, The Analysis of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), Chap. II. Also see D.W. Gotshalk, Art and the Social Order, 2nd ed. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1962), Chapter V.

Some aestheticians deny that music has any "meaning" at all; others prefer to talk of "expressiveness." Still, the expression "musical meaning" has enough currency to warrant a closer look. Perhaps the debate is not so much about whether music does or does not have certain properties as it is about whether the properties music undeniably possesses qualify as "meaning". But three seemingly commonsense suggestions concerning what meaning means are enough for the purposes of this unit.

First, it is only sensible to insist that if music is to have meaning, the meaning should be statable or paraphrasable -- recognizing, of course, that there are no precise verbal equivalents. Paraphrasing, as the New Critics insist, may be heresy in that the paraphrase is not even a faint echo of the original. But if a work says something to us, it is only natural to try to state what it says.

Second, musical meaning should possess a degree of commonality. That is, people should be able to agree roughly what that meaning is, If something is permitted to "mean" vastly different things to different people, then it does not really have a meaning at all.

Third, to be differentiated from pure form, meaning should always bear a relationship to the world outside the work of art. In representational painting, for example, there is a reference from the object as depicted to the object as it exists, or may exist, in the "real" world. A recitation of the elements and relationships within a work of art, whether in painting or music, cannot be that work's meaning; it is nothing more than a description.

There are two crucial questions:

a. Does a musical composition have any relationship to the world outside itself, and if so, how is it establshed?

b. Do such relationships as may exist between a musical composition and the world qualify as meanings?

The second question will be largely ignored here; it is a question for advanced classes in philosophy. But the first is more interesting, for answers to it give a clue as to why people think that music has meaning.[1] There are at least three ways in which music can refer to, or call to mind, external reality.

1. Imitation. Music, being sound, can imitate things that make sounds: ticking clocks, thunderstorms, singing birds, cuckoos, splashing fountains, swords clanging in battle, and so forth. Sound imitation might be called the musical equivalent of representation in painting. The instructor may wish to play a few musical excerpts. The important thing to realize, though, is that imitation obviously sets up a relationship between music and the thing that makes the sound being imitated.

2. Association. We live in a society steeped in music, and many compositions may either make use of our attitude to other music normally associated with certain events or activities. Through association of ideas and images, the activities normally accompanying this type of music will then be called to mind; a connection to the

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[1] For a full discussion of these and other problems related to musical meaning, see Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics, Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958), Ch. VII, "The Meaning of Music," pp. 318-366.

the external world is brought about. When the listener hears a march-like piece of music, for instance, he thinks of other marches, parades, and so forth. A dance-like tune sets toes tapping; a dirge-like one induces funereal thoughts. Compositions may sometimes incorporate complete musical passages that have normally specific functions -- taps or reveille, The Marseillaise, God Save the King, for examples.

Folk or popular tunes, or snatches of them, are employed by composers to induce certain associations and references. Dvorak uses negro spirituals in The New World Symphony. Snatches of well known tunes can lead to musical puns and jokes, acessible only to the initiated.

3. Discourse. Another way music refers to external reality is through the suggestion of human speech; not the meanings of the spoken word but the sounds, the inflections, the cadences of the voice. Music contains discourse-like passages: a conversation between the "voices," even an argument; a peremptory summons; questions and answers; the solo instrument "holding forth" or "lecturing" to the orchestra. Examples are not hard to come by. A good one is part of Richard Strauss's Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, the passage where one can discern the stern voices of the tribunal, Till's meek replies, and finally the thundering condemnation.

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Sample Analysis:

Students might now listen to and discuss relevant excerpts from Gustav Mahler's First Symphony, a work well suited to classroom use because of its melodic passages and striking rhythmic effects -- and because Mahler provided the following "Program Outline" when he first composed the work (though he later disavowed this program).

Part I. Days of Youth. Youth, flowers and thorns

1. Spring without end. The introduction represents the awakening of nature at early dawn.

2. A Chapter of Flowers (This movement, and Andante, was withdrawn by Mahler after a Weimar performance of the score, He never reinstated it.)

3. Full Sail! (Scherzo)

Part II. Commedia Umana (The Human Comedy)

4. Stranded. A funeral march a la Callot [Jacques Callot, the seventeenth-century French engraver]. The following remarks may serve as an explanation, if necessary. Th[illegible]or received the external incitement to this piece from [illegible] pictoral parody well known to all children in South Germany,"The Hunter's Funeral Procession." The forest animals accompany the dead forester's coffin to the grave. The hares carry flags; in front is a band of gypsy musicians and music-making cats, frogs, crows, etc.; and deer, stags, foxes, and other four-footed and feathered denizens of the forest accompany the procession in comic postures. In the present piece the imagined expression is partly ironically gay, partly gloomily brooding, and is immediately followed by

5. Dall'Inferno al Paradiso (allegro furioso) (From Hell to Paradise) the sudden outbreak of a profoundly wounded heart.[2]

At the instructor's discretion, the above citation and the materials to follow could be duplicated and distributed to students as an example of how musical annotations find meaning in music.

The first movement is marked in the score Langsam, schleppend wie ein Naturlaut (slowly and drawn out like a sound of nature. The long-held A in the strings, various woodwind instruments gurgle out snatches of a theme, with clarinets and trumpets chiming in, but from afar. The call of the cuckoo is heard from the clarinet and then the main section of the movement is ushered in by an upwardrising theme in the basses. The melody is the same one Mahler used some years earlier in the second song from his cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Songs of a Wayfarer) -- "Ging Heut' Morgen Über's Feld" ("Across the Field I took my Way"). The second theme is introduced softly in the horns and then taken up by the cellos. There is an elaborate development of the material and the end of the movement is an animated romp with punctuations of dramatic silences. The second movement, Kraftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell (busily agitated, but not too fast), begins with a heavy-footed passage in the low strings, with the woodwinds immediately stating the peasant-dance Ländler that forms the principal basis of the musical discourse. The Trio is a delicate, dream-like section whose chief melodic material is first stated by the violins, pianissimo. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen (Solemn and measured, without dragging) is the marking over the third movement, a macabre section that begins with alternating tympani strokes pianissimo and then introduces a double bass solo that is a parody burlesque on the old French nursery tune "Frere Jacques," in the minor. The second subject moves the music into the major mode, and in the words of Mahler's biographer, Paul Stefan, "an oboe bleats and squeaks in the upper register; the shrill E Flat clarinet quacks; over a quiet counterpoint in the trumpets, the oboes are tootling a vulgar street-song." It is all part of Mahler's parodistic nature, even to his inclusion of another of the songs from the Fahrenden Gesellen cycle -- this time from the fourth of them, "Die zwei blauen Augen" ("Your sweet eyes of blue"). The "Frere Jacques" theme returns again at the end and the movement dies out into nothingness. The brief silence is shattered by the eruption of the turbulent final movement, marked Sturmisch bewegt (Stormily agitated). Themes from the first movement are repeated and the entire grandiose conception recalls what Mahler's friend and disciple Bruno Walter called the "raging vehemence" of Mahler's nature. The music is let to rise to an enormous climax, as if to burst its own bonds, and then it falls back exahusted to regain its strength for the final peroration. Mahler directs that at the end seven horns must cut through the heaving orchestra in a "chorale of salvation from paradise after the waves of hell." In his monograph on Mahler and his music, Walter writes that the demonic conclusion of this extraordinary symphony is a "triumphant victory over life."[3]

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[2] From Martin Bookspan, 101 Materpieces of Music and Their Composers (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1968)

There is something in Mahler's music to talk about; statements can be made about it. There can also be a considerable degree of agreement about how passages singled out are characterized: for example "The music rises to an enormous climax...and then falls back exhausted" probably describes pretty well how most listeners hear the passage to which the statement applies.

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[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 235-6

Surprising as it may be, while the properties of music singled out for discussion are interesting and help the student appreciate the distinctive powers music has, they have little to do with the excellence of music from an aesthetic standpoint. Some insipid compositions -- especially those that try to "paint pictures with music" -- make lavish use of imitation and association and are none the better for it. On the other hand, some celebrated works are highly formal, that is, quite devoid of anything one could be tempted to call "meaning".

There is, then another level of musical attention, the formal sheerly musical one.

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Suggested Classroom Exercise

a. Play a musical work, or a portion of one, for the class; for example:

"The Pines of the Villa Borghese" from Respighi's Pines of Rome.

Rachmaninoff's "Vocalise" for voice and orchestra
The second movement of Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra
The pop single Love by the Love Orchestra

b. Ask students to list their impressions, i.e. what ideas, colors, scenes, things came into their minds while listening to the music, The teacher lists a sampling of these on the board under the heading "effects."

c. The music may then be played a second time and the students asked to locate the place in the music where the "effect" or impression occurred. The teacher stops the tape at these points and these sections of the music are played again and analyzed in musical terms--pitch, duration, dynamics, musical causes of the students' effects. In this way the students can move past the associative level of musical awareness to a purely musical awareness of musical elements in action.

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Session

Discussion can concentrate on the ways analogous principles of form are used in art and the musical soundtracks of the film. A teacher might very well create a slide-sound sequence, starting for example, with a painting--Delacroix's Lion Hunt, for example--and showing how formal elements in it suggest elements in Romantic music and result in similar effects--a strong emotional quality, tension, strong opposition of elements.

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Session

The opening of this unit examined the relations of musical form to musical meaning, or meaningfulness. Then analogous principles of form in art and music were looked at. The unit can be brought to a close with an examination of a genre that combines words and music, i.e., song.

The arts, of course, are often combined: song, ballet, opera, film. When this happens, one art may be emphasized at the expense of another. In opera the orchestra, the music, or the voice may dominate the drama. If either opera or film is to be aesthetically satisfying, the arts should be so combined as to produce a unified effect. Prokofieff, for example, argued that music for films is good only when it sounds awkward and incomplete when heard on its own. His Alexander Nevsky when heard in concert is a completely new reworking of the material that is heard in the film of the same name. Or to see how in composite forms one mode of expression depends on the other, read aloud the lyrics of a popular song. Without the support of the music, they can be inane indeed.

The following musical selections illustrate some of the ways words and music may be used in songs. (In a later unit, relations between words and music are treated in an historical perspective.)

1. Play Handel's "Every Valley Shall Be Exalted," from the Messiah. Ask the class how Handel's music relates to the images of the text: e.g., "mountain," "rough," and "plain." This is an exaggerated example of the integration of verbal idea and musical expression. The music cannot be fully understood without reference to the words.

2. Next play four popular songs: "Blue Moon" by Richard Rogers; "I Want to Hold Your Hand" by the Beatles; "I Cover the Waterfront" by Heyman and Green (sung by Billie Holiday, ESP 3002); and "The Man I Love" by George Gershwin. Ask the class if they agree that at the other extreme from Handel's "Every Valley Shall be Exalted" is "Blue Moon." At first the text describes the singer "standing alone without a dream in my heart, without a song of my own." In the last stanza the singer has found a lover and is "no longer alone," etc. The text has moved from loneliness and despair to love and hope. The moon has become an entirely different symbol. But the music for both stanzas is exactly the same.

Heyman and Green's "I Cover the Waterfront" is set syllabically (each syllable is matched by one note). But notice what the Blues singer Billie Holiday does with the melody: the syllables of several words are sung on two or more notes. Listing the words in which she does this makes it apparent that they carry the entire sense of the song: "Horizon...watching...love...me...waterfront...here am I...

return...watching...love...back to me." In the songs of all cultures there is a tendency for emotion-laden words to be given musical elaborations.

In the Beatles' "I Want to Hold Your Hand," the most concrete word that suggests fulfillment of the aspirations of the lover is "hand." And this word is set to a group of notes ("melismatically," in technical language) just as Handel sets "exalted." Notice the syncopation of "happy" and "inside" and "hide" (i.e., the agitation in the rhythm: the word does not fall on a strong beat of the music). Feeling "happy inside" is disconcerting and upsetting; the tension building in the lover is developed in the repetition of "I can't hide." And the vocal ornamentation of "hand" is a release--if only in Thellover's fantasy--of the tension.

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D. Reading Suggestions

1. E. H. Gombrich, Norm and Form (London: Phaidon).

The chapter "Norm and Form" is especially recommended.

2. John Hospers, ed., Artistic Expression (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971).

Inasmuch as "meaning" is often associated with "expression," this volume provides a useful survey of expression theories of art.

3. Albert William Levi, Literature, Philosophy, and the Imagination (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962).

Chapter Five is especially relevant as it examines the forms of literary imagination in terms of Peirce's categories of firstness, secondness, and thirdness, categories applicable to all of the arts.

4. Leonard B. Meyer, Emotion and Meaning in the Arts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

Meaning is tied to the notion of "expectation": "If, on the basis of past experience, a present stimulus leads us to expect a more or less definite consequent musical event, then that stimulus has meaning."

5. Thomas Munro, The Arts and Their Interrelations, rev. ed. (Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University, 1967).

A comprehensive study of the topic. The last chapter, added to the revised edition, presents a systematic classification of four hundred arts and types of art.

6. Erwin Panofsky, Meaning in the Visual Arts (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1955).

Defines and illustrates types of meaning in art history, especially iconographical and iconological meaning.

7. Marlo Praz, Mnemosyne: The Parallel Between Literature and the Visual Arts, the A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1967 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

Particularly pertinent to the ideas examined in this unit.

8. Louis Arnaud Reid, Meaning in the Arts (New York: Humanities Press, 1969).

Probably the most comprehensive and systematic study of the topic currently available.

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E. Audio-Visual Suggestions

Films:

1. Forms of Music: Instrumental
Color 16 minutes

2. Meaning in Modern Painting (Part One)
Color 23 minutes

Meaning in Modern Painting (Part Two)
Color 17 minutes

3. Music and Architecture Through the Ages
15 minutes

4. Music: The Expressive Language
Color 12 minutes

5. Music to Live By (The Humanities Series)
Color 20 minutes

6. New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts:

   What Does Music Mean? 54 minutes
   What Does Classical Music Mean? 57 minutes
   What Does Orchestration Mean? 55 minutes
   What is a Sonata Form? 54 minutes

7. "Form and Meaning," produced by City Colleges of Chicago. Available on videocassette from the Great Plains Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501.

8. "Expansive World," produced by City Colleges of Chicago. Available from the Great Plains Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

F. APPENDICES

Teachers interested in doing additional exercises designed to show similarities in the arts may find the following suggestive and useful:

1. Rembrandt, Delacroix, and Renoir; A Comparison

Renoir, On the Terrace   Rembrandt, Portrait of his Father

Delacroix, Lion Hunt

COLOR	Broken	Chiaroscuro	Red with low saturation green background; loose but not broken
LINE	Felt or implied	Sharp detail vs. vague suggestion	"S" curves; tension between axes, loose quality
SPACE	Aerial perspective; advancing character of saturated colors	Modeling in light	Foreground, middle ground, background
TEXTURE	Actual textures not attended to	Great variety in visual center	Variety of actual textures suggested
SHAPE and PATTERN	Ovals	Careful placement of body and head - relation of planes	Twisting shapes; avoidance of straight line

BACKGROUND	Combination of a landscape, a portrait and a still life	Chiaroscuro	Forms of clouds and hills
INDIVIDUATION OF SUBJECT	Woman in general: youth, beauty, and nature	A particular man	Figures are interdependent; cultural meaning stressed; man vs. nature

* * *

2. The Realization of Open Space and Great Scale in the Arts

Objective: The objective of this exercise is to help students become aware of the similarities and differences in the ways the arts depict or communicate the look or feel of open space.

Students are presented with a videocassette that has as its content different art works that treat "open space and great size," (A special film to accompany this course of study was produced by the City Colleges of Chicago. See audiovisual suggestions above.)

Content of the Film

Friedrick, The Monk on the Seashore - Painting
Introduction of Strauss's Thus Spake Zarathustra - Music
Giacometti, Man Pointing - Sculpture
Motherwell, Open #20 - Painting
Conclusion, Webb's Wichita Lineman - Pop Music
Whitman, "Smile, Your Lover Comes" - Poetry
Interior, Chartres Cathedral - Architecture
Martin Luther King, "I have a dream..." - Speech

Students are asked to find what the works have in common in terms of "feel," "look," and "sound." Through a dialogue the teacher helps them arrive at the "spacious" quality or feeling in each work. The teacher and the students then investigate how and why the spacious quality is created in each of the works (in terms of concept and then in relation to the actual manipulation of artistic elements to achieve effects).

For example: The elongated thinness of the figure in Giacometti's Man Pointing creates the feeling of loneliness and isolation the sculptor desired to express. This same thinness creates a feeling of great space around the figure, which also adds to the effect of loneliness and isolation.

or

In the introduction of Strauss's Zarathustra the feeling of immense size and space is partially created by having a huge orchestration sound as if far away.

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3. Form and Expression in Painting

One might speculate on the effects of the isolated elements of the arts. Vivid red could be called "exciting," a major chord played by a full brass section might seem majestic; or the word "forlorn" can suggest sadness in its sound alone. But the meaning and expressive effect of any of these elements depend upon the context in which they occur. A crash of lightning is not as startling in the midst of an electrical storm as that same crash would be if it happened on a quiet summer evening. In the relationship between the elements there dwells an expressive power that the elements isolated from each other do not have. Noticing this is noticing the form of the work of art.

Slides: Rembrandt, Portrait of Harmen Gerritsz Van Rijn
Renoir, On the Terraca
Claesz, Still Life (c. 1630) Art Institute of Chicago
Cezanne, Basket of Apples
A 3-D Lion cardboard assemblage, put together as directed
A 3-D Lion cardboard assemblage, spread apart on a flat surface
The Rembrandt portrait with an impressionistic background substituted for the original.
Renoir with the railing removed.
Claesz with the background objects removed.
Cezanne with the bottle and the plate of rolls removed.

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4. Literature, Music and Painting

Materials within one work can be developed and can interact in such ways that a single idea can grow to have ever-widening meanings. Ideas that at first seemed to be unrelated can later be intensely interactive in a moment of unexpected climax.

Literature and music become involved in discussions of exposition, development, restatement of them, climax, and resolution. Are these coincidences of language? Or are real correspondences of aesthetic principles involved. (Marcel Proust's Remembrance of Things Past is one of the great fictional achievements of modern times and begins with a prologue that is organized like a musical overture. Thomas Mann--especially in Dr. Faustus and in the Joseph series--consciously adapts musical form to the novel.)

In Romeo and Juliet the visual analysis gives:

Brown for the Friar theme.
Red for the Strife theme.
Blue for the Love Theme a: Romeo
Green for the Love Theme b: Juliet

In The Dead the various colors are more or less intense depending on how important the theme is to a particular episode. In some episodes several themes appear in differing degrees of intensity.

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5. Student-Made Sound Films and Slide-Tape Operas

The best way to stimulate student thoughts about relationships between the arts is to encourage them to "produce" a composite film--a brief film segment, a slide sound presentation. Here are some suggestions:

Sound Film

Materials: 1. Silent Film footage of a car driving through neighborhoods. The car parks; a man gets out and enters a house.

2. A recording of 30 to 40 "off-the-shelf" musical excerpts.

Procedure: Select musical background for the film footage. How many varieties of meaning can be given to the film by changing the musical background?

Slide-Tape "Opera"

Materials: 1. The text of The Dead

2. A recording of 30 to 40 "off-the-shelf" musical excerpts.

i.e., the excerpts are selected passages of about 30 to 60 seconds long of the type of catalogued background music canned for TV shows. They are not labeled, but are intended to provide a broad resource of emotional expression that can relate to various parts of the story.

3. Slides which portray a selection of different actors, different props, etc., all of which might be possible visualizations for the people, objects, and places in the story.

Procedure: Select one scene from The Dead, e.g.:

Gabriel waiting to enter the party;
Gabriel dancing and talking with Molly Ivors;
Gabriel watching his wife listening to "distant music";
Gabriel and Gretta alone in the hotel.

From "off-the-shelf" music select appropriate material as background music for the scene. Decide where it is better to have no music.

Select appropriate actors, costumes, sets. What vocal characteristics should be sought in the actors? How should they move in the set? When? What colors and shapes are needed in the set? Can empty space be used expressively? What should the actors wear? What colors?

In the text of the story delete passages that are no longer needed because the same meaning is communicated by the musical or visual elements added. Is it still necessary to have some passages narrated? Can the dialogue stay the same or should it be altered?

If this were to be an opera (a sung drama), what quality of voice would be appropriate for each character?

Present the result as a continuity. Criticize it in terms of the similarities or differences that it has then compared to the original.

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A Musical/Visual Exercise Based on "King of the Bingo Game"

Purpose: to make the students more aware of the communicative properties of the arts through a creative/analytic process of choice.

The students read the story.

A group of visual options are presented for making the story a movie. (Colors, costumes, settings, etc.) The students make choices and discuss them in terms of the story (content, mood, etc.).

A group of musical options are presented for use in backgrounding the movie. The students make choices and discuss them in terms of the story and their previous visual choices.

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7. Study Guide for James Joyce's "The Dead"

a. Although most of this story is involved with a party, it is entitled The Dead. Some critics believe that the Misses Morkan's annual party is not a party at all but rather an "annual dance of death" or a "funeral oration." What evidence can you find that the party is not alive, but dead?

b. There are references to ritual-like repetition (e.g., an "annual" party), to objects set out in symbolic patterns (e.g., the description of the sideboard arrangement, p. 125, and the table set for dinner, p. 136). Some critics have suggested analogies to the calendar of religious liturgies: remembrances of the dead, reference to Christmas, to Resurrection, to an Ascension from darkness to revelation (Gabriel goes up the stairs to the party; he sees his wife from the bottom of the stairs as they leave the party; he goes up the stairs as they leave the party; he goes up the stairs to the hotel room with his wife). What is there about religious ritual that can be found in this story: in what people say to each other, in the involvement of the arts in what they are doing, in the ways in which what is happening at the party is somehow important to the meaning of the whole course of all their lives? (Joyce was born and bred into Catholicism and received his education in Jesuit schools.)

c. What evidence is there that Gabriel would rather be separated from those at the party (his opinion of the men dancing, his references to literary sources in his speech, his preferences for the continent, his feelings about Miss Ivors).

d. What does the snow symbolize? Upon whom does it fall? Trace its appearance in the story. In this context, discuss the images of warmth, cold, fire, and light.

e. What rebuffs does Gabriel suffer? Is there a pattern of intensity in these? Is his self-possession regained or destroyed at the end of the story? What has he lost? What has he found out? Is he better off at the end than he was at the beginning?

f. Compare the language in the first paragraph of the story with that in the last paragraph. What is there in the use of the vowel and consonant sounds, in repetition of words and ideas, or in the pace or rhythm of the words that is directly suggestive of the ideas presented in these two passages? What analogy does this technique have with music?

g. Some critics find the suggestion of a Resurrection theme. Is there any hope of rebirth for Gabriel at the end? What can be found in the course of the story that suggests his need for rebirth? Is the need conscious? What does "Journey westward" signify?

Additional Suggestions for The Dead

The student can list what is known about Gabriel Conroy:

a. from what he thinks about himself;
b. from what he tells others about himself;
c. from what others say or think about him;
d. from what the author tells the reader directly about him;
e. from the way he acts.

Are all these lists the same?

Examine the women in the story in terms of how they serve as foils to reveal Gabriel:

Lily
The aunts
Mary Jane
Molly Ivors
Gretta Conroy

Examine the man in the story in the same way:

Freddy Malins
Mr. Browne
Bartell D'Arcy
Michael Furey

The episodes in which Gabriel is involved with each of the first three or four characters in each list above can be examined in terms of how they prepare the reader for the climactic episode with Gretta and Michael.

How many characters mentioned in the story are no longer living?

How many characters are thought of in terms of how soon they will be dead?

How are the dead and the living brought together in the final episode with Gretta? In what sense is Gabriel "dead" at the end?

In musical terms many of the above considerations are like theme and variation forms in music, or like contrapuntal texture in a fugue, or like more intensified orchestrations of a repeated theme. What analogies do these have in Romeo and Juliet by Tachaikovsky?

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8. Additional Suggestions

Visual and Musical Analogies

Film: Excerpt of Bolshoi Ballet Film of Music from Gounod's Faust

Slides:
1. Delacroix, Lion Hunt (whole, plus selected details)
2. Andrieu, Lion Hunt (whole, plus selected details)
3. Amiens Cathedral (whole, plus selected details)
4. Himeji Castle in Japan (whole, plus selected details)
5. Wen Cheng-ming, Scroll of the "Seven Junipers"
6. Kung Hsien, Mountain Landscape
7. Maori Wood Sculpture from New Zealand, Tattooed Head of Ancestor
8. Wall painting in situ Ekibondo Village
9. The Laocoon Group
10. Bolshoi dancer in arabesque
11. Sadler Wells dancer in arabesque (e.g., Swan Lake)

Suggestions:

Application of both visual and musical analyses can be made to the Bolshoi film. A useful comparison can be made between a Bolshoi arabesque (lines of tension within the figure are typical) and the arabesque of a more classical style (continuous directional flow of line in the Sadler Wells dancer).

Examine Amiens and Himeji Castle from point of view of unity of elements, tension, and completion of themes in the relationships of parts, and movement of space in architecture.

Slides 5-9 offer cross-cultural treatments of the same aesthetic themes.

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Musical Analysis

Works:

Bach, Fugue from E m Toccatta, Pt. 11 (Recorded by piano, recorded by woodwinds.)
Chopin's Revolutionary Etude: Recording of left and right hand played separately.
Brubeck Quartet, Blue Rondo a la Turk. Sax solo from middle blues section recorded with 4-beat background accompaniment.
The Beatles, "I Want To Hold Your Hand," Voice parts recorded without insistent background elements.

Questions:

What does the interplay between the left and right hands in Chopin provide that neither hand has of itself?

How do the freely improvised sax solo and the accompaniment create tensions in Blue Rondo? How does this differ from the relatively "planned" ensemble ideas in the first part of the work? Why does the accompaniment get more rigid when the sax solo becomes more free?

The Beatles background of itself seems monotonous. How does this intensify the meaning of the vocal line? Why are some syllables in the song sung on only one note while the syllable "hand" is sung in an elaborate melisma (i.e., on syllable sung on several notes)?

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Come Rain or Come Shine by Harold Arlen

This song is a love song that has as its central theme the idea of the inevitability of love.

"I'm going to love you
Like nobody's loved you
Come Rain or Come Shine"

The melody literally stays on one note for the first two bars as if driving the note into your mind. This type of single note repetition constitutes the main idea of the A, A; and C sections of the song. Only the B section of the tune (A B A' C) varies this pattern. It is a daring example of a strikingly unified conception.

Other Examples

"Windmills of your Mind" (revolving)
"Rain Drops" (Off-hand-casual-" I don't care")
"Aquarius" (Spacious)

"The Man I Love" by George and Ira Gershwin

Play tune with vocal (32 bars)
Recite lyric
Play time instrumentally
Repeat first step

Question:	How is it that the words and music unite into a whole?
Answer:	The music "says" what the words do.

The lyric depicts a lonely, bored woman who yearns for her man to make his appearance. The loneliness is carried by the descending 1/2 step in the harmony. The boredom is carried by the melody which is extremely repetitious. At "B" of the song (an AABA form) the lyric becomes more specifically hopeful so the melody changes to suit the new hopeful tone. At the return of "A" the woman is still alone and hoping as she was at the beginning so the music returns to that stage also.

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VII. CANONS OF JUDGMENT IN THE ARTS

On the Functions of Art

One can hardly make any statement about art without having to admit, in some context or other, the very opposite. The work of art is at once form and content, an affirmation and a deception, play and revelation, natural and artificial, purposeful and purposeless, within history and outside of history, personal and superpersonal.

Arnold Hauser

On the Definition of Art

...it behooves us to deal generously with the traditional theories of art; because incorporated in every one of them is a debate over and argument for emphasizing...some particular feature of art which has been neglected or perverted. ...what is central and must be articulated in all the theories are their debates over the reasons for excellence in art--debates over emotional depth, profound truths, natural beauty, exactitude, freshness of treatment, and so on, as criteria of evaluation--the whole of which converges on the perennial problem of what makes a work of art good. To understand the role of aesthetic theory is not to conceive it as definition, logically doomed to failure, but to read it as summaries of seriously made recommendations to attend in certain features of art.

Morris Weitz

On the Uses of Critical Argument

...in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the fine arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection.

David Hume

VII. CANONS OF JUDGMENT IN THE ARTS

Overview

Having had opportunities to develop a critical awareness of a variety of art forms, as well as insight into the relations between form andmeaning in the arts, the student now turns to the problems of developing critical criteria for the judgment of art. Among the topics discussed are the functions of art, the "definition" of art, and the critical evaluation of art.

Objectives

1. To introduce students to notions of the functions of art in society.

2. To acquaint students with influential theories of art and critical evaluation.

3. To practice applying critical criteria to works of art.

Suggested Reading Assignments

The following readings, admittedly difficult for beginning students, suggest major views of the functions of art in Western civilization. A teacher may prefer to leave the readings to the option of students and summarize the views represented as works--films, poems--are discussed in class.

1. Aristotle, Poetics.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, I - VII.
3. Leo Tolstoy, What Is Art? and Essays on Art, appropriate selections.
4. David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste".

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Contents

A. Introduction: The Functions, Definition, and Evaluation of Art
B. Suggestions for Teaching
C. Additional Reading Suggestions
D. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

A. Introduction: The Functions, Definition, and Evaluation of Art

In previous units students have practiced critical skills of awareness which can attune them to the peculiar powers and meanings of works of art. Assumptions about the nature of art, its functions, and criteria of aesthetic merit were, while not explicitly stated, implicit in each of the units. That is, to select works for discussion and analysis, suggest that certain kinds of things be perceived in works of art, and talk about art in certain ways is to hold assumptions about the definition, functions, and evaluation of art.

This unit centers attention more directly on these topics, presenting useful distinctions and critical schmema for thinking about the functions and appraisal of art.

As the quotation from Arnold Hauser at the opening of this unit strongly implies, not only do works of art perform a variety of different functions, but often several functions can be ascribed to a single work, depending upon the approach to the work a critic takes. The same civic mural may, for example, perform the personal functions of self-expression, the social function of commenting on society, and the physical function of decorating and filling out a design. Or it can be judged with regard to its cognitive, moral, and aesthetic values (to use another set of distinctions relevant to the evaluation of art): 1)it conveys information about society (cognitive function); 2)it has a beneficial and uplifting effect on its environs and those who view it (moral function), and 3)it is worth contemplating as an object in itself (aesthetic function). This last consideration, the aesthetic function, is especially important in experiencing and evaluating art as art, literature as literature, and music as music; for no matter what a work of art may "say," or what effects it may have, it is not likely to be highly regarded as art unless it is intrinsically interesting to perception, unless it is worth looking at, reading, or listening to from an aesthetic point of view. This is what Santayana meant when he wrote that "Beauty is pleasure regarded as the quality of a thing" (The Sense of Beauty). The manner, in other words, in which information is conveyed or effects achieved is relevant to the appraisal of something as a work of art.

Some theorists consider the aesthetic function to be the most important function of art, outweighing social, cognitive, and moral functions. Others hold that moral and intellectual aspects, of works of art should be taken into account in our experience and assessment of them. Tolstoy is the outstanding proponent of this latter view, whereas a contemporary aesthetician like Monroe C. Beardsley, (also discussed in this unit), would hold that the aesthetic function is enough, even in the case of literature.

It is difficult--indeed as some theorists would says, it may be impossible--for any single description of art to capture the multitude of functions performed by art. Accordingly, the myriad definitions of art, and the myriad functions of art they imply, may be understood as attempts by theorists not to define the essence of art once and for all time, but rather to emphasize in their definitions those aspects of art and the experiences of art which they think are fundamental and should not be ignored. Such definitions are sometimes called "persuasive" definitions, and their persuasiveness derives from their ability to charm others and gain critical acceptance among critics and connoisseurs of the arts.

The very nature of artistic creation, however, keeps the concept "open", and from time to time theorists revise their definitions of art by either expanding or contracting the range of things they are willing to count as art, or as contributing to a work of art. At the present moment in the history of culture, the situation is confusing and chaotic. The phenomenon known as "anti-art," for example, is, in effect, a repudiation of all received definitions of art. Depending on what metaphor is preferred, we are experiencing either a massive "break-up," "de-definition," or "radical substraction" of art's vital elements, thus putting experiencers of art today on their own to decide for themselves what constitutes genuine and spurious art. This unit is designed to help teacher provide students with some of the theoretical and practical skills for this task. As such, the unit illustrates the relevance of the academic discipline, known as aesthetics (philosophy of art) to practical matters of teaching and learning aesthetic judgment.

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B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

The most painless way to broach the subject of the function of art is through a film. The widely used film, Art--Why Is It? (30 min.) is a good one to use. The following is a description of the film:

> John Canaday discusses man's relationship and describes how art has helped us better understand life. Introduces prehistoric art; contrasts the cultures of Egypt, Greece, and Rome as expressed in their art; and reveals

the development of Christian art. Describes the preoccupation of the artist as he attempts to produce images of his god, discover the world, and discover himself. Discusses the contributions to art of Pissarro, Michelangelo, and Rembrandt.

The whole film need not be shown, merely enough of it to convey a sense of art's possible functions. Discussion may then center on the clarification of the different kinds of functions performed by works of art. The instructor might duplicate and distribute "Possible Functions of Art" below as a guide in developing student responses. He or she may also want to explore the notion of classifying the arts as Fine Arts or Useful Arts and the implications of this classification in modern culture.

* * *

Some Functions of Art

1. Personal: When works of art reveal something characteristic of the artist, e.g., his private emotions, feelings, or experiences, or his ideas about political and social events, e.g. war, wealth, or urban life.

2. Social and Moral: When works of art (a) portray persons living in society or comment on the public as an aggregate body, (b) influence individual or collective behavior either positively or adversely--as might be the case in propaganda, pornography, and revolutionary art--and (c) celebrate public events, as in commemorative music, poetry, and drama.

3. Cognitive or Intellectual: When works of art convey information about something or provide insight into the human condition or the cosmos.

4. Physical: When works of art are created for physical use, such as buildings, tools, containers, clothing.

5. Idealistic: When works of art present quests for the ideal, for perfection, or for the strongly desired, as in the classical style, utopian planning, or pure form.

6. Representational: When works of art portray things as they actually appear to be, with little or notattempt to idealize or otherwise alter.

7. Critical: When works of art are critical in an obvious

way whether of persons, institutions, ideologies, society or other works of art.

8. Satirical: When works of art denounce abuses or human folly through the devices of humor, sarcasm, irony, or wit.

9. Imaginative: When works of art appeal primarily as products of imagination and invention, that is, as fanciful or fantastic verbal, visual, and auditory images.

10. Sensational or Exploitive: When cheap sensations are exploited.

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As she or he did in the "Inventory of Experiences" of an earlier unit, the instructor can raise once again questions regarding the sources of students' ideas, values, and goals. Particularly do the arts figure, or have they figured, in student styles and goals? Through such questioning students may begin to perceive some of the relations between art, society, and themselves.

For example, do students tend to believe that art and artists are essentially conservative or disruptive forces in society? In what ways do they think the economic basis of a society influences that society's art? What seems to remain constant in the functions which art performs? What seems to change? As Aristotle argued, is poetry--i.e., art in a broad sense--"truer" than history? What do students think, for example, of Oscar Wilde's quip that far from art imitating nature it is rather the other way around, that is, nature, including human nature, imitates art. Is Shelley's belief that poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world still true? Or even Dewey's notion that art is more moral than moralities? Or Whitman's notion that the poet is the priest and interpreter of values in a democratic society?

That art has the power to shape sensibility is an idea as old as Plato, who, by the way, argued that poets should be banished because they obscure essential realities. A modern version of this belief seems to be accepted by one contemporary critic, Jacques Barzun, who has speculated that the adversary modern temper may well be a product of the education provided by modern artists over the last century and a half.[1]

After some initial discussion of the "Possible Functions of Art" the teacher will want to select illustrative works of art to be shown, played, or read. A matching of works with functions--some of which some students will find questionable--might look like the following:

Van Gogh, "Starry Night"	1, 5, 9
Simon and Garfunkle, "Mrs. Robinson"	1, 2, 7, 8, 9
Advertisement	2, 3, 9, 10
Frank Lloyd Wright, "Falling Water"	2, 4, 5, 9
Gaston LaChaise, "Standing Woman"	1, 5, 9
Shakespeare, "Sonnet 73"	1, 3, 5, 6, 9
Beethoven, "Choral Finale," Ninth Symphony	1, 5, 9
Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9
Pablo Picasso, "Guernica, "; Francesco Goya's Lessons of War; Henry Reed's poem, "Naming of Parts," or a war poem by Rupert Brooke, Karl Shapiro, Randal Jarrell, et al.	2, 8

Session(s)

The somewhat superficial treatment of the functions of art suggested above will prepare the way for a generalized discussion of three influential and representative theories, or definitions, of art, those of Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Aristotle. Should a class be made up of gifted students or students who display interest in this kind of investigation, readings in Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Aristotle (listed at the beginning of this unit) should be assigned. Special attention must be paid in these theories to both (a) the characteristics which works of art must have to merit praise, and (b) the effects art is held to have on the percipient or beholder of art.

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[1] See The Use and Abuse of Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

To stimulate discussion further, a teacher might show the class several slides, ranging from one that he or she suspects will outrage many of them--e.g., a Picasso, a Kandinsky, a Miro--to ones that will immediately please or edify or inspire them. The immediate line of questioning is obvious: "Why do you like this?" "Why don't you like that?" "What gives this one universal appeal?" Hume's On The Standard of Taste is especially useful in this respect, since it does get at questions every class loves to wrangle about: that is, are there qualities in all works that appeal to most people? Is one man's opinion as good as another? Is beauty objective or subjective?

A next step is to point to elements in a painting that most students dislike-its color, its composition, etc.--then supply background discussion to suggest what the artist was about.
After all this, does anyone want to change his mind and agree that, say, Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" is a good painting?

The field of study or discipline which speculates about, analyzes, and attempts to clarify matters regarding the nature of art, experience of art, and aesthetic judgment is known as Aesthetics, or, as it is also called, the Philosophy of Art.

Aesthetics has as its subject matter a critical examination of of the defining characteristics of art and the criteria which might be established to make comparative judgments within the arts. The following questions are generally considered to be central ones in aesthetics: 1) Is it possible to give a definition of art? 2) Is it a series of symbols which imitate or reproduce events in actual life? 3) Is its purpose to create ideals which far transcend the expectations of everyday life? 4) What is the relationship between art and beauty? 5) Between art and pleasure? 6) Is art that which has the capacity to communicate emotions? 7) What do we mean when we say an object is "beautiful?"

Another important question is whether aesthetic criteria can be established which enable discriminating judgments to be made about the quality of certain artistic efforts. Some critics, as well as some theorists, reject any such notion of aesthetic standards, claiming that matters of taste are wholly subjective. (Hume's essay, listed at the beginning of this unit, is particularly interesting in this connection and has the virtue of being lucidly argued.) Among those critics who do accept aesthetic standards, there are at least three prevalent opinions about the nature of those standards.

1. There are _a priori_ norms for judging the arts, formulations of which must be set forth independently of experience.
2. After long experience with a genre, we note that the finest examples within the field have certain principles in common. Thus, we conclude there are _a posteriori_ criteria for aesthetic judgments.
3. The criteria for judging works of art are entirely emotive.

In the continuing battle over aesthetic criteria, two additional issues merit consideration. The first is whether art has an obligation to instruct the perceiver in moral principles--to instruct and delight. Should the beautiful be associated entirely with goodness? Second, is it impossible to distinguish between fine art and either popular or craft art?

The ideas of Aristotle, Nietzsche, and Tolstoy might very well be discussed at this time--or presented by the teacher, if the students have not read the selections suggested above. The aim cannot, of course, be a complete and thorough analysis, but simply enough to convey a sense of what these three theories of art imply. The teacher, too, may want to apply the following notions, found in Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Aristotle, to works the students have read or looked at in the course:

Leo Tolstoy, What Is Art?

1. Tolstoy spends a great deal of time telling us what art is not, perhaps in recognition of how difficult it is to give a definition of art.

2. He finally concludes that art is not so much associated with beauty or pleasure as it is with the capacity to convey feeling, which he regards as a basic mode by means of which individuals are immediately able to relate to one another. Art then becomes a way of communicating those emotions to which we attach special significance and enables us to overcome our isolation from one another.

3. Art must have the capacity to produce an immediate, intuitive response in the individual(s).

4. Tolstoy, accordingly, places great emphasis on the qualities of clarity, individuality, and sincerity in an artistic work of any genre.

5. One very important criterion is the degree to which the artist himself is involved in his own artistic activity, and this degree of involvement will be reflected in the capacity of his work of art to affect others.

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Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy

1. Nietzsche suggests that history has not yet uncovered the

conditions which encourage those individuals who are able to sustain the creative process, an activity in which intensity of feeling and the calm of reflection unite. The creative process is described as "a continuous movement between high and low, and the feeling of high and low, a constant state of mounting as on steps, and at the same time reposing as on clouds." Throughout The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche reiterates the importance of aesthetic principles which insist upon a balance between intensity of feeling and some concept of order or harmony--passionate expression controlled by reflection.

2. He had a deep admiration for the excellent achievements of Greek culture. Two different but interrelated principles of aesthetics emerged from the Greek civilization. In Nietzsche's view, these principles are recurrent and essential structures in all artistic genres. They are

3. The Apollonian Principle

Nietzsche was a great admirer of the early philosopher Heraclitus, who argued that forces in nature exist in a state of perpetual conflict and are ultimately unified by their interdependence. He believed this conflict was quite typical of Greek culture. He found their civilization to be characterized by difficult and unusual changes, a culture which survived because of its ability to bring order to the conflicting elements within society. Hence, some of the finest examples of the Apollonian principle are seen in Greek sculpture.

The Apollonian principle emphasized moderation (an aesthetic and an ethical concept for which the Greeks were famous), balance, and the harmonious interrelationship of opposing elements. This principle is expressed in moral terms in the principle of the Golden Mean which is explained in Aristotle's Ethics.

Works of art give structure to artistic materials in such a way that the individuation amongst entities in the scene is sharply delineated.

The Apollonian principle enables us to discover the general or abstract form in the particular details of the incident, i.e. to say what is representative of a certain type of experience.

Such abstract forms embody ideal types of phenomena, and thus, the perceiver does not experience a direct emotional involvement in the work. Apollonian art suggests a world of idealized dreams which take place in private, nonempirical realms.

Slides of Greek sculpture can be shown to the class, e.g., the stylized grief and pain portrayed in the Dying Niobid.

4. The Dionysian Principle

Nietzsche does not contrast rational form and irrational frenzy. His Dionysian principle suggests the intensity and diversity of feeling which can be expressed within a work of art, a principle incomplete without Apollonian principles of order.

Dionysian elements in art make no attempt to represent types of experiences but rather portray a particular emotion in a realistic manner.

Representation of emotion in Dionysian art is characterized by the following descriptions: a release of passionate energy and vitality, a letting go of oneself so as to recover a sense of self and a sense of unification with other beings and entities in the works and a state of intoxication. One can be transported into this state of Dionysian abandonment through the dance, participation in certain religious rituals, and lyrical poetry.

Illustrations of Dionysian elements in art can be found in Van Gogh's special intensity, the later works of Kandinsky in which color is used to represent the degree of emotion expressed. Popular examples are the film Black Orpheus, and the central theme and dance ensemble from the rock musical Hair.

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Aristotle, Poetics

1. Aristotle's definition of art as imitation appeals to our instinct and is essential to our nature. When we create artistic works of objects, we thus attempt to imitate significant activities in our lives. The writer of a tragedy imitates the actions, character, and emotions which are probable and appropriate in the natural development of a situation. The playwright utilizes spectacle, rhythm and harmony, and the diverse uses of language to enhance the dramatic potential of the incident and, as a secondary consideration, the moral qualities of the individuals involved. Plot is the most important element in a tragedy for it is in a completed action that characters will be revealed. The suggestion found in some critics--the Roman poet Horace, for example--that the function of art is both imitative and didactic is another matter and has caused considerable debate. (It should be remembered that Aristotle arrived at his principles inductively, that is, by examining the tragedy of his own time, especially the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles. In addition, much of what he says in the

Poetics must be related to what he says in other places, especially the Metaphysics.)

2. The Forms of Artistic Representation

   a. Modes of Imitation--epic poetry, drama (tragedy and comedy), mime, philosophical dialogue.

   b. Objects represented--representations of human relationships either nobler than actual events (tragedy) or satirically worse than the actual (comedy).

   c. Manner of representation--direct or indirect narration.

3. Aristotle considers drama a higher form of imitation. It is tragedy which is of greatest interest to him. By studying the tragedies of his time, especially Oedipus, he traces such things as the development of plot, addition of complex characters, and diminishing significance of the chorus.

4. The tragic dramatic form imitates serious actions using song, rhythm and language in an orderly arrangement. The six parts of tragedy are as follows:

   a. Mode or medium

      Plot--arrangment of incidents, according to certain laws of what is imaginatively necessary or probable

      Character--ascription of qualities to an agent which reveal something of the agent's moral worth

   b. Manner

      Diction

   c. Objects of representation

      Thought, Spectacle, Song

5. Plot in Tragedy

   a. Plot must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The most satisfactory kind of plot is one in which the moments of reversal and discovery coincide. That is, Oedipus discovers what his secret and guilty past are at the very moment his fortune takes a definite turn for the worse. He discovers that he himself is the source of the evil he has rashly vowed to stamp out at the very moment his fortunes take an irreversible turn toward a tragic end.

   b. Character in a tragedy is revealed through moral choices, giving evidence of the worth of the individual by those things which he selects and refuses. According to

Aristotle, however, the development of character is subordinate to the development of plot. That is, characters are realized through action.

c. The "higher" emotions of pity and fear are felt by an audience when the drama portrays conflicts among close friends and/or family and generally persons of good moral intent, men like ourselves, neither too good nor too bad. The hero has a flaw, as we all do--a tendency toward rashness faulty judgment--that, given the unfolding of the plot, leads him to his tragic end.

It is important to note that essential to the tragic effect in the Greek tragedies was freedom to make a moral choice. Antigone, for example, chose to defy rather than to conform, and her choosing makes her mistress of her fate and the victim of fate.

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David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste." (1757)

The 18th century English philosopher Hume raised the question all of us raise at one time or another. He notes:

> The great variety of taste, as well as of opinion, which prevails in this world is too obvious not to have fallen under everyone's observation.

He is not talking about the functions of art, but is concerned with whether beauty resides in the object or in the eye of the beholder. We have heard the axiom that there can be no dispute in matters of taste-- "de gustibus non est disputandum." How far can we carry this?

Hume argues that in ethics, as in criticism, there is agreement on the general. That is, everyone praises beauty and justice. It is the particulars that make the difference. That is, is this particular building beautiful? Does this particular act violate the principle of justice?

There is general agreement in criticism in certain areas. Milton, for example, is granted an undisputed place in poetry by all students of literature. Robert Browning is awarded a place as a major poet; Arthur Hugh Clough is listed in the histories of literature as a minor poet. (A sophisticated reader of contemporary literature would not regard the verse of Rod McKuen as equal to that of William Carlos Williams, or the fiction of James Michener as equal to that of E.M. Forster.) Hume reminds us that although everyone prizes certain qualities, there is not a principle of natural equality of tastes. He also argues that what pleases in writing depends on a reader's experience. In other words, an inexperienced or unsophisticated reader does not always recognize in the object that which all men agree is pleasing as a general principle. He concludes that much of the differences in taste are due really to what he calls differences in the "delicacy" of taste:

> amidst all the variety and caprice of taste there are certain general principles of approbation and and blame whose influence a careful eye may trace in all the operations of the mind.

But these principles presuppose a reader or viewer who is in the "right" condition. That is, if one reads a book or views a film when he is overly tired, suffering from headache, or in a bad mood, he may not be receptive to its virtues.

Question: Can the students name any paintings, novels, or films that they viewed or read at times when they were not in the "right" condition to appreciate? (Some high school teachers, for example, assign works--e.g., Anna Karenina or A Passage to India-- that their students are too inexperienced from the standpoint of experience in life and literature to appreciate. Or certain works read at too early an age--Animal Farm, Alice in Wonderland, Huck Finn, Gulliver's Travels--are not recognized as containing qualities that please all discriminating adult tastes.)

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Session(s)

Teachers, if at all possible, should have their students read a Greek or Shakespearean tragedy and a modern "tragic" play--e.g., Ibsen's Ghosts, Miller's Death of a Salesman. The student will see that, given the absence of free choice, modern tragedies are not really tragedies in Aristotle's sense.

At this point students may be somewhat confused and bewildered with regard to the notions of the functions, definition, and evaluation of art. But if they have been at all attentive, they will have become aware that judgment of art rests on premises which are not immediately apparent.

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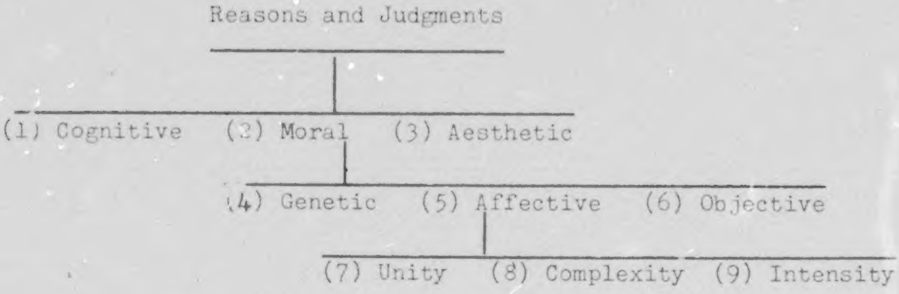
Judgments

As he does a classroom or home study exercise, the teacher will find the diagram below taken from Monroe C. Beardsley's Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York, 1958) useful. It will help you to keep in mind the variety of judgments which can be made of works of art, the kinds of reasons which can be given in support of judgments, the language associated with each type of judgment, and the type of judgment that Beardsley himself considers to be most relevant to works of art.


Reasons and Judgments
(1) Cognitive
(2) Moral
(3) Aesthetic
(4) Genetic
(5) Affective
(6) Objective
(7) Unity
(8) Complexity
(9) Intensity

Examples

(1) Cognitive: The work is praised for making a contribution to our knowledge.

(a) It is profound
(b) It has something important to say.
(c) It conveys a significant view of life.
(d) It gives insight into a universal human problem.

(2) Moral: Moral value is ascribed or denied to the work.

(a) It is uplifting and inspiring
(b) It is effective social criticism
(c) It promotoes desirable social and political ends.
(d) It is subversive.

(3) Aesthetic: This category is divided into (4), (5), and (6) below.

(4) Genetic: These judgments refer to something existing before the work itself, to the manner in which it was produced, or its connection with antecedent objects and psychological states.

(a) It fulfills (or fails to fulfill) the artist's intention.
(b) It is an example of successful (or unsuccessful) expression.
(c) It is new and original (or trite).
(d) It is sincere (or insincere).

(5) Affective: Judgment refers to the psychological effects

of the aesthetic object upon the percipient.

(a) It gives pleasure (or gives no pleasure).
(b) It is interesting (or dull and monotonous).
(c) It is exciting, moving, stirring, rousing.
(d) It has a powerful emotional impact

(6) Objective: This category is divided into (7), (8), and (9), below.

(7) Unity:
(a) It is well-organized (or disorganized).
(b) It is formally perfect (or imperfect).
(c) It has (or lacks) an inner logic or structure or style.

(8) Complexity:
(a) It is developed on a large scale.
(b) It is rich in contrasts (or lacks variety and is repetitious.)
(c) It is subtle and imaginative (or crude).

(9) Intensity: (Of human regional qualities in the work).
(a) It is full of vitality (or insipid).
(b) It is forceful and vivid (or weak and pale).
(c) It is beautiful (or ugly)
(d) It is tender, ironic, tragic, graceful, delicate, richly comic.

Unity, Complexity, and Intensity become the three General Canons of criticism: The Canon of Unity, the Canon of Complexity, and the Canon of Intensity, support a large number of critical reasons. Reasons that do not appear to be covered will, on analysis, "be found either to fall outside the group of Objective Reasons into intentionalism or affectivism, or else to connect indirectly with the Cannons."

"To sum up, the three general critical standard, unity, complexity, and intensity, can be meaningfully appealed to in the judgment of aesthetic objects, whether auditory, visual or verbal. Moreover, they are appealed to constantly by reputable critics. It seems...that we can even go so far as to say that all their Objective reasons that have any logical relevance at all depend upon a direct or an indirect appeal to these three basic standards."

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Beardsley contends that judgments which contain critical statements about an object's unity, complexity, and intensity are the most meaningful types of judgments one can make of works of art as art. The possession by a work of art of these qualities, or some combination of them, is what makes the work aesthetically pleasing, what makes it stand out and invite attention, what ultimately gives it its artistic value. The extent to which works of art are weak or deficient in these qualities, to that extent their aesthetic value will be low.

Clues to the type of judgment critics and others make may be found in the language used, examples of which are contained in the diagram.

Beardsley further holds that it is the possession of unity, complexity, and intensity that imparts to an object the capacity to induce aesthetic experience in a beholder, listener, or reader. Aesthetic experience is more than a source of special delight or sensations that are especially gratifying. Moments of aesthetic experience are also occasions of self-integration during which all the faculties tend to operate at a heightened capacity.

Thus, a work of art in Beardsley's view is an object that has a capacity (again because of its peculiar qualities) to induce high-grade aesthetic experience. Works of fine art tend to have this capacity in greater degrees than do objects on which artists have lavished little concern for formal organization, levels of significance, or dramatic intensity. Thus lovers of painting and music never tire of a Rembrandt portrait or a Beethoven symphony. They quickly exhaust, however, the elements of aesthetic delight in a Norman Rockwell

Saturday Evening Post cover or the Tchaikowsky 1812 Overture.

Students should examine the kinds of judgments they tend to make of works of art. In analyzing their own statements and those of other students they should ask whether the judgments of works of art appeal primarily to (a) elements and factors extrinsic to the work itself--e.g., the message of the work: (b) the effects of the work on emotions and feelings--did it make them feel sad or glad?; (c) the properties and qualities of the object itself--its purely aesthetic elements; or to (d) a combination of a, b, and c. The easiest way to do this in the classroom is to show a series of slides, call for judgments, and relate the judgments to the bases for judgment just listed.

Able students might be asked to analyze a published critical article or review with a view to discovering the basis of judgment. Music, drama, or film reviews that appear in metropolitan newspapers make good material for other exercises of this kind.

The following analysis of a Cezanne painting might be duplicated and distributed to the class as a sample critical article. The teacher will then want to show the class a slide of the painting.

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Sample Analysis

The following is an analysis and appreciation of a Cezanne landscape scene by Meyer Schapiro (Cezanne, New York, 1952, p. 74). The task is to discover the reasons the artist thinks the painting is worth looking at.

> The peak of Mont Sainte-Victoire near Aix attracted Cezanne all his life. He identified with it as the ancients with a holy mountain on which they set the dwelling or birthplace

of a god. Only for Cezanne it was an inner god that he externalized in this mountain peak--his striving and exaltation and desire for repose. In the painting in the Metropolitan Museum, the mountain comes less fully to view; its majesty is diminished by the foreground trees and the great extension of the valley at the right. The broader London picture renders the characteristic grandeur of the site, but also gives greater play, as I have said before, to the artist-observer and his turbulent mood. The stable mountain is framed by Cezanne's tormented heart, and the peak itself, though more serene, is traversed by restless forms, like the swaying branches in the sky. A pervading passionateness stirs the repeated lines in both. Even the viaduct slopes, and the horizontal lines of the valley, like the colors, are more broken than in the picture in New York. The drawing and brushwork are more impulsive through out. Yet the distant landscape resolves to some degree the strains of the foreground world. The sloping sides of the mountain unite in a single balanced form the dualities that remain divided, tense, and unstable in the observer's space--the rigid vertical tree and its extended, pliant limb, the dialogue of the great gesticulating fronds from adjoining trees that cannot meet, and the diverging movements in the valley at the lower edge of the frame.

It is marvelous how all seems to flicker in changing colors from point to point, while out of this vast restless motion emerges a solid world of endless expanse, rising and settling. The great depth is built up in broad layers intricately fitted and interlocked, without an apparent constructive scheme. Towards us these layers become more and more diagonal; the diverging lines in the foreground seem a vague reflection of the mountain's form. These diagonals are not perspective lines leading to the peak, but, as in the other view, conduct us far to the side where the mountain slope begins; they are prolonged in a limb hanging from the tree.

It is this contrast of movements, of the marginal and centered, of symmetry and unbalance, that gives the immense aspect of drama to the scene. Yet the painting is a deep harmony, built with a wonderful finesse. It is astounding how far Cezanne has controlled this complex whole. If you wish to see his subtlety at work, consider only the bending of the tree which becomes perpendicular to the mountain's slope when it reaches the horizon. Or observe the rectangular and peaked forms of the house beside the trunk of the same tree.

Formulate your response by saying "According to Schapiro, Cezanne's painting is good because...."

After "because...." list the reasons Schapiro gives for thinking the painting significant, i.e., select those sentences and phrases which contain his reasons. Relate his reasons to the diagram from Beardsley on pp. 17 and 18 above.

Next, examine the reasons you have selected. What kind are they? What do they refer to? Effects in the viewers? The work itself?

What do statements about the work itself emphasize about the painting? Are they about the painting's formal organization? Levels of meaning? Dramatic intensity? Other things?

If the teacher lives in an area where symphony orchestra performances, plays, and movies are regularly reviewed in newspapers, he or she may want to assign all students the out-of-class exercise of examining a newspaper review to uncover the premises on which the reviewer's judgments rest. Are the judgments based on purely formal elements in the work itself? Feeling and impressions induced in the reviewer? The reaction of the audience present at the performance? Profundity or shallowness of thought in the work?

Students will discover that most newspaper reviews are little more than random impressions, with little attention given to the formal aspects of the work in question.

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While practicing the skills of aesthetic judgment in the classroom, it is convenient to use works in which the elements are in full view and do not require time to unfold, as in music, dance and literature. This is one reason for using a Cezanne painting to illustrate the elements of a critical judgment. However, given the concern with the self in this course and the place given to literature, critical evaluation of a short story or a play is in order. The instructor may want to go back to the works introduced in the opening unit on the self.

At first glance the vision in Cezanne's landscape does not disclose what may be called an image of self. But one of Schapiro's remarks addresses the relationship of the painting to Cezanne himself. Schapiro speaks of the peak of Mont Sainte-Victoire as "an inner god that he (Cezanne) externalized...his striving and exaltation and desire for repose," and that "the stable mountain is framed by Cezanne's tormented heart"--an interesting statement, although it might have startled or amused the painter. But we cannot expect painting to provide insight into the self the way literature does. As Lionel Trilling has said, "Literature is dedicated to the conception of the self."

Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present (New York: Macmillan Co., 1966).

Currently the standard history of aesthetics. The chapters on Aristotle, Romanticism, the Artist and Society, and Contemporary Developments are especially pertinent to this course.

2. Irwin Edman, Arts and the Man (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1939).

Subtitled "A Short Introduction to Aesthetics," this still remains one of the more readable books on aesthetics. Especially good on the function of art.

3. Edmund Burke Feldman, Varieties of Visual Experience (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., n.d.).

Part One examines the personal, social, and physical functions of art. Also good on the styles of art and art criticism.

4. John A. Kouwenhoven, The Arts in Modern American Civilization (New York: The Norton Library, 1948).

A study of the relationship between a civilization and its arts. Attempts to identify and trace an American aesthetic.

5. F. David Martin and Lee A. Jacobus, The Humanities Through the Arts (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1975).

A volume quite compatible with the structure of this course. Chapter Three is devoted to a discussion of art criticism. Also good on the elements of the arts. The revelation of values is taken as art's major function.

6. Robert C. Niece, Art in Commerce and Industry (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., 1968).

Examines the aesthetic qualities found in everyday possessions.

7. Harold Osborne, The Art of Appreciation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

Currently the best exposition of the concept of appreciation, especially the chapter on percipience.

8. Victor Papanek, Design for the Real World, Bantam Books, 1973.

Interesting discussion of the importance of design, mass-produced or not, in the environment we live in.

9. George Steiner, Tolstoy or Dostoevsky (New York: Random House, 1959).

Subtitled "An Essay in the Old Criticism" this volume studies Tolstoy's and Dostoevsky's literary contributions in light of their lives and thought and the historical circumstances in which they lived. Analysis of Dostoevsky's literary devices in Notes from Underground is especially pertinent to this unit.

10. Morris Weitz, Problems in Aesthetics, 2nd ed. (New York: MacMillan Co., 1970).

Currently the best introductory collection of readings in aesthetics. All topics examined in this unit are treated with relevant selections from the past and present.

Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. Select from any number of films--e.g., Jacques Lapsy's Dream of Wild Horses or My Trip to Africa--for an analysis of the film's function. The former invites attention to its metaphoric richness while the latter is noteworthy for its drama.

2. Show a short film on art or art appreciation. Ask students to try to uncover the criteria used by the director or film-maker in selecting works to be shown, or by the narrator in talking about the works in the films. What kinds of judgments and reasons seem to be emphasized or assumed?

3. See "Non-Western Art," program #6, in Man and His Art, available for rental or purchase from Great Plains Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501, in video-tape or film. Revolves around the lack of distinction between the fine and the useful in Non-western art.

VIII. IMAGES OF INITIATION, AFFECTION, AND DEATH

On Literary Truth

The truth we especially expect literature to convey to us by its multifarious modes of communication is the truth of the self, and also the truth about the self, about the conditions of its existence, its survival, its development. For literature...the self is the prime object of attention and solicitude.

Lionel Trilling

On Theme

People talk about the theme of a story as if the theme were like a string that a sack of chicken feed is tied with. They think that if you can pick out the theme, the way you pick the right thread in the chicken-feed sack, you can rip the story open and feed the chicken. But this is not the way meaning works in fiction...The meaning of a story has to be embodied in it, has to be made concrete in it. A story is a way to say something that can't be said in any other way, and it takes every word in the story to say what the meaning is.

Flannery O'Connor

On Reading Literature

In learning how to read a poem or play or story, we are necessarily improving our knowledge of grammar, logic, and rhetoric (the three elements of the old medieval trivium), and we are also learning about history (what has happened to humanity in the past) and about religion and philosophy (systems of values and ideas).

Cleanth Brooks

VIII. IMAGES OF INITIATION, AFFECTION, AND DEATH

Overview

Part Two, Cultivating the Self Through Critical Awareness, centered on the ways in which someone can become aware of the special features and meanings of works of art. Emphasis was on how the self perceives, experiences, and judges, once skills of analysis have been learned. In this part of the course there is still concern with the self that responds, but emphasis is on the humanistic meanings and significances of works of art, especially on the ways works of art articulate the relations of the self to others, to society, to the cosmos, and to itself. (Later, the self will be examined in relation to history.)

In this unit exploration of the self is carried on primarily in short stories and novellas devoted to the themes of initiation, affection (or love and hate), and death. Students will have an opportunity to apply the skills stressed in earlier units.

Objectives

1. To point to some of the ways in which works of fiction mirror recurrent and constant human concerns.

2. To encourage understanding and appreciation of how serious short fiction offers insight into commenting on the human condition.

3. To supply further practice in applying the skills needed to read literature with understanding.

Suggested Assignments

The experienced teacher of literature will know many stories that deal with the themes that form the focus of this unit. The sample analyses that follow are based on the frequently anthologized stories listed below. Teachers whose specialty is not literature may want to assign them.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, My Kinsman, Major Molineux

Anton Chekov, Gusev

D. H. Lawrence, Tickets, Please

Joseph Conrad, The Secret Sharer

Leo Tolstoy, The Death of Ivan Ilych

Contents

A. Introduction: The Self in Fiction
B. The Elements of Fiction
C. Suggestions for Teaching
D. Strategies for Teaching Short Stories
E. Additional Reading Suggestions

A. Introduction: The Self in Fiction

If the truth we expect from literature is the truth of and about the self, as the critic Lionel Trilling claims, then the range of human concerns found in literature must be large indeed. Serious fiction suggests the possibilities of the self in its formative as well as its final years; in its numerous relations with others; in the intellectual, social, religious, and cultural life; in relation to nature and the cosmos.

Only three themes, ones of consuming interest in our time, are selected for study here: initiation, affection (and its opposite between the sexes), and death. The stories referred to by Hawthorne, Chekov, Lawrence, Conrad, and Tolstoy reveal the self in extreme situations.

The skillful author leaves it up to readers to arrive at their own judgments of characters. Readers, that is, must judge for themselves the acts, ideas, and inclinations of the young captain and Leggatt in The Secret Sharer; of Annie and John Thomas in Tickets, Please; of Pavel and Gusev in Chekov's story Robin in My Kinsman, Major Molineux; the wife, daughters and cast of characters that attend the death of Tolstoy's Ivan Ilych, as well as the dying Ivan himself.

In brief, when reading the stories in this unit, students should look for the ways in which the self of the protagonist has already become and becomes implicated with others, with society and its institutions, with history, with the universe, and not least of all, with itself. The reader will ask himself the extent to which the protagonists determine and realize their true selves. What, moreover, are the barriers which make the attainment of selfhood difficult or problematic? Finally, how does the author dramatize and make meaningful the quest for self?

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B. The Elements of Fiction

The following glossary can be reproduced and distributed to the class before the stories assigned are read and discussed, if the teacher thinks it is useful to do so. Most anthologies of fiction, however, contain introductions or appendices on the elements of fiction.

In this unit, short stories and novellas are read for the humanistic insights they provide, as well as for their interest and artistry. Although the elements and devices singled out below are common to all fiction, short stories and novellas, students should not read them as they read novels. The shorter fictional forms strive usually for a single predominant effect.

First, the rather exhaustive outline given in an earlier unit entitled "Developing Critical Awareness: Literature" is as useful for examining the short story as it is for other genre. Obviously not all questions apply with equal importance to all stories, and part of the challenge posed for the experienced reader is that he recognize just which are the pertinent questions to ask of any work.

One does not learn terminology for its own sake. But the special terms serve us when we talk or write about literature. The glossary below has been kept brief, containing only key terms already used in our discussion which keep popping up in intelligent discussions of a short story or novella.

Glossary

A. ACTION: What happens in the story.

B. ATMOSPHERE: The mood which envelopes a story: the general feeling created by all the details of plot, character, setting, and diction. (Hawthorne's My Kinsman, Major Molineux, for example, has an atmosphere of gloom and mystery.) To be distinguished from TONE, which is the author's own attitude toward his subject and his audience--e.g., ironic, serious-minded, sardonic, etc.

C. CONFLICT: The encounter between opposing forces in the plot which creates interest and suspense in the reader.

D. DÉNOUEMENT: A French word denoting an "unraveling"; that part of the plot in which conflicts are resolved.

E. DICTION: The pattern of words an author uses: his characteristic vocabulary in a particular work.

F. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: Figures of speech used to create special effects and to extend meanings beyond their mere denotation. The most common are based on resemblance: e.g., simile, metaphor, symbol.

G. IMAGERY. A pattern of language, often figurative, which supports and expands the theme of a literary work. Thus the fact that Gregor Samsa, in Kafka's the Metamorphosis, is turned into an insect (and not, say, into a peacock), means that he is given insect-like characteristics (he "scurries," is helpless and immobile when overturned, shuns the light, etc.) says something about Samsa, and--to the degree that he represents some or all of mankind--about mankind itself as viewed in this story.

H. IRONY: A term referring to contrasts or discrepancies between what seems to be and what actually is, or what a character thinks is the case and what the situation really is for that character. Irony can be verbal, dramatic, or situational. 1) We say of someone who is stingy that he will give to the office fund with his characteristic generosity. This is verbal irony. 2) Dramatic irony occurs, for example, in a play when the audience has knowledge or information the characters in the play do not--as when the audience knows that King Oedipus, the true cause of the evil that hangs over the city, has vowed to destroy himself when he vows to stamp out the evil in the city, or when a messenger in Macbeth, ignorant that the King has been murdered, is told that he is asleep, while the audience is aware that the King is already dead and will sleep forever. 3) In Chekov's Gusev, there is situational irony; Pavel's very cleverness in getting third class passage for himself proves his undoing. This is sometimes called the irony of fate.

I. MOTIVATION: The reason that makes a character do what he does. It is often left indeterminate, as with Leggatt's notion for swimming off to shore at the end of The Secret Sharer.

J. PLOT: The English novelist E.M. Forster (in Aspects of the Novel) defines plot as follows: "A plot is... a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality." "The king died and then the queen died" is just a story, whereas "The king died, and then the queen died of grief" is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality supplies a line of development.

Note, however, that in some stories--and this is partly true of Gusev--the crux is a subtle disclosure of a facet of character or a view of the universe, rather than overt conflict and the marked climax that we associate with "fully" plotted stories. What is noteworthy is that at the end of a story some significant change has taken place in at least the principal figure--e.g. a small detail lets a wife know that her husband no longer loves her; a casual remark lets a man know he is no longer young; someone discovers that his grief is dead.

K. POINT OF VIEW: The angle from which a story is told. Conrad's The Secret Sharer is told in the first person, which means that the action is filtered through an interpreting mind. Some writers adopt an "omniscient" point of view, which means they can report what goes on in any number of places and in everybody. (Point of view was discussed earlier in connection with film.)

L. STRUCTURE: The "shape" of a story, so to speak, and the arrangement of its elements. Is the story told in a straightforward sequence, just as the events occurred? Are there parallel or contrasting narrative threads? Does the story begin like the _Odyssey_ in the middle of things (_in medias res_) and flash back to earlier action?

M. STYLE: Style in prose is the effect attained by an author through the purposeful selection of words, the structure of the sentences. Style is both the trademark of a period and a person.

N. SYMBOL: A word, phrase, image or event that stands for a larger idea. Again, the "insecthood" of Gregor Samsa is symbolic of all the cringing, scurrying, timorous, crawly, aspects of human beings.

O. THEME: An idea that informs a work. Broadly speaking, the theme of _My Kinsman, Major Molineux_ is initiation--initiation into life, and into the problem of evil. Theme should not be confused with a "moral." A story is an author's vision of some aspect of life; it is not a sermon.

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C. Suggestions for Teaching

This unit leads up to the two novellas of Conrad and Tolstoy by way of short stories by Hawthorne, D.H. Lawrence, and Anton Chekov. The short stories treat the themes of initation, affection (or love and hate) and death, while the novellas present more extended treatments of initiation and death. As indicated, a teacher may prefer to assign other stories that help these themes.

Session(s)

For the first session, students should have read either "The Elements of Fiction" presented above or a presentation of the elements in a textbook, and the assigned stories by Hawthorne, Lawrence, and Chekov. Before the stories are discussed, a film entitled The Truth of Fiction may be shown:

> The Truth of Fiction (The Humanities Series)
>
> Quotations from narrative works of various genres (short story, allegory, novel) illustrate Freud's theory that fiction writers are valuable allies in the search for realities, in that they draw from sources not yet available to science. Quotations represent all times from Medieval to Modern. Works quoted are listed in credits at end of film. 21 minutes. Color.

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Nathaniel Hawthorne, My Kinsman, Major Molineux

Hawthorne's story is in the time-honored tradition of stories of rites of passage, of initiation--what the Germans call the Bildungsroman, the story of a hero's education. There was a time when John Bunyan's Puritan classic, Pilgrim's Progress, was part of almost everyone's education. Life, as Bunyan tells his readers, is like a journey fraught with danger for the Christian in search of salvation. There are obstacles and temptations awaiting the Christian on the path of life. The story of the journey of life has been told over and over again: Parzifal in Teutonic myth; Odysseus during his ten years of wanderings; Huck Finn floating down the Mississippi making the momentous decision not to turn in his friend, the escaped slave Jim, learning the while that the values of the respectable people one inherits are not always admirable.

Hawthorne's story will perhaps be somewhat difficult for students since the language and style are old fashioned. Sentences are longer than ordinary modern readers like them to be. The vocabulary will test his mettle, and may try his patience.

The action of the story can be described as "rising," moving steadily from Robin's appearance on the scene to the climax when Robin finally sees his kinsman in his sorry plight. Suspense mounts as Robin asks three times of three different people, the whereabouts of his kinsman. (Three-time repetition and triads are engrained in the human psyche. Peter denies Christ thrice, Lear has three daughters, Goldilocks visited three bears, etc. Hawthorne, consciously or unconsciously, puts us in touch with hundreds of old tales by his repetition of the formula.) The story takes on part of its tone and Gothic flavor from its atmosphere.

To modern taste, Hawthorne's use of symbol may seem a bit contrived: the light shining on the Bible, the mysterious man on horseback with hooked nose, two protuberances on his forehead, his face black on one side and red as fire on the other. By the end of the story, when the young Robin wants to cross back on the ferry (Charon, in Greek myth, ferried the souls of the dead across the river Acheron, to Hades) an impetuous, confident young Robin has become an older and wiser Robert.

Discussion Questions

The Text

1. Does the dialogue sound "true" aloud? Is it a good and true rendering or oral language? Explain.
2. What is the function of the first paragraph? What does it do? Would the story be better without it?
3. Is it worth considering why Hawthorne wrote a short story, and not a novella or a novel? Could the disillusionment of Robin be told in two hundred pages, rather than in these few? What would the writer have to do differently?

Structure and Point of View

1. Who tells the story? Does the teller have feelings of his own about Robin? Is the teller aware of his audience--and to what degree?
2. It is possible for a narrator to stand outside his characters and relate only what he sees--what you or I would see. It is also possible for a narrator to take the privilege of being "omniscient"--able to look into the minds and discover the thoughts of all the characters. (Whichever he chooses, however, he must stick with it, or the reader may object rightly that there is a "shift in focus," or "a shift in point of view.")
    a. Where does the narrator stand vis-a-vis his characters in this story? ("'This low hovel cannot be my kinsman's dwelling,' thought he...")

b. Consider different media. "Shift of focus" is a metaphor taken from the world of photography or cinema. Would a "shift of focus" in the narration of this tale be more acceptable in a film than in prose? What cinematic techniques would you use to show a shift from inside a character's mind to a view from the outside?

c. Consider painting. Look at the twelfth paragraph from the end of the story--the one beginning "A mighty stream of people..." Think what a painter might do with the scene: discuss it. Look at a reproduction of Rembrandt's famous painting, The Night Watch. Consider the function of light as used by Rembrandt and by Hawthorne.

Write down all the words in this paragraph ("A mighty stream...") that appeal to the senses. Which senses are appealed to?

Meaning:

1. "Irony" was briefly defined in Section B of this unit. Ask students if there are any instances of irony in this story?

(Robin naively thinks his cudgel will stand him in good stead for the sorts of encounters he will have. It is, of course,not a tool of any worth in his first encounters with Evil, with maturity, with whatever it is that Robin confronts his rite of passage. Secondly, of course, there is a major dramatic irony--the irony underlying the entire plot--of Robin unwittingly asking after his kinsman, expecting him to be an honored citizen, when in fact he is in the sad plight in which we find him.)

Robin's good-natured naivete and his quickness to bristle at offense seem treated with benign amusement by the author. Ironically, he and those of whom he makes inquiries, are at cross purposes.

2. Does Robin's voyage from Innocence to Experience to an open encounter with a world in which there is evil?

What, precisely do you think Robin has learned?

If there is irony in Robin's wanting to get the ferry back, in what sense?

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Anton Chekov, Gusev

Gusev is a kind of story quite different from the others we are reading, for it seems "plotless". Wallace and Mary Stegner note that "the short story as a distinctive form has turned away from plot, and has tended to become less a complication resolved (i.e., plot) than a situation revealed." In this regard, Gusev is a type of story far ahead of its time (late nineteenth century)

Instead of unravelling a complicated situation or giving an account of a journey this "story" is a rumination on the human estate and the significance--rather, the cosmic insignificance--of a man's death.

The story develops with an encounter, an exchange between two very different characters, Pavel and Gusev. The former is verbal, always outraged, always protesting, always arguing about life and its injustices; the latter--gentle, contemplative, a creature of instinct, uncomplaining, and above all, accepting. Nothing really is at stake between the two characters, except that they represent differing attitudes toward life.

The story is named for Gusev; he is the principal character. The story, with Gusev as a type of humankind--a modern Everyman--expands on its opening sentence: "It is already dark, it will soon be night." This is the story of one man--neither better nor worse than you or I--and his entry into the Night that awaits us all. Unlike Everyman of the morality play, there is no one to go with him and be his guide.

Study Questions

1. What is revealed in the story of Gusev?

   Describe Gusev's reveries or day-dreams. What do they reveal?

   How much can the reader tell about the character of Gusev? About Pavel?

   What in the story reveals what the reader can tell about them?

   Is anything revealed about the nature of mankind? Gusev, dead and sewn up in sailcloth, looks like "a carrot or a radish." Why did Chekov choose these images; why not "a golden pear" or "merely an oblong object in a bag"?

   Is it not irreverent to say of the deceased, he goes "Plop!"? With what do we associate the word "plop?"

2. In retrospect, what does the first sentence, "It was already dark, it will soon be night," mean?

3. Is the thesis of this story an ironic reference to "The meek shall inherit the earth?"

   Describe the last view of Gusev. Is it glorious?

   Describe the last word-picture in the story. Is it glorious?

4. At the end of the story, as Gusev's carcass is sinking to the bottom, the heavens seem to give a sign. "The clouds are massing, one resembling a triumphal arch, another a lion, a third a pair of scissors." One interpretation of the story has it that the one cloud is really a symbol of an arch of triumph, another--the lion--of power and might, a lion of royalty. The scissors are those that in Greek and Norse mythology were the instruments that capriciously cut the delicate thread of the life of man.

   Why of all things he could have chosen, did Chekov choose the images of lion, arch and scissors?

5. At the very end, the ocean itself, "takes on tender, joyous, passionate colors for which it is hard to find a name in the language of man."

   Is it not strange that a writer, whose medium is the language itself, should declare his inability to do justice to whatever it is that is happening?

6. Is there a relationship between humans and nature that is drawn in the last two paragraphs? What is that relationship?

7. Michael Polanyi, an eminent scientist and philosopher, has said "we know more than we can tell." Compare that statement to the last ten words in the story.

   Is there something beyond words in this story?

   Could what Chekov is suggesting be expressed effectively in a non-verbal medium--e.g., dance, music, painting?

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D.H. Lawrence, Tickets, Please

In reading D.H. Lawrence's story, students have advantages they did not have in reading the two other stories. This story is neither a translation (as is Gusev), nor is it written in the more convoluted language of a century ago (My Kinsman, Major Molineux). It is easier, therefore for them to attend to the diction and see how that diction works to emphasize the twin themes of Love and Hate in their interrelationship.

The action is fairly straightforward, commencing with the account of the philandering John Thomas and rising to a climax in the violent and vengeful assault of the girls with whose affections he had been toying. Appropriately, the story is set in wartime; the girls wear uniforms. Annie watches John Thomas first "vanquish" one girl, and then another. When the girls attack John Thomas, "Their blood was now thoroughly up." He is their "sport," and when he is defeated, Annie kneels on him as he lies "with face averted, as an animal lies when it is defeated and at the mercy of the captor." Annie has a cold triumph." The language--the diction--is associated with battle, the chase, blood sport, And in the service of what theme? The longing of one sex for the other (nothing arouses the girls' anger as much as when he derides their shabby and un-homelike surroundings, and their natural longings for home, with the words "There's no place like home, girls." (The nickname, "Coddy" (see "Cod" or "Codpiece" in an unabridged dictionary) with its coarse connotation, insults, and is intended to insult, John Thomas.)

The language reinforces meaning throughout this story. The first sentence, for example, describes a track, a tramway system meandering through a countryside. The structure of the sentence itself suggests a track as it winds through villages, over canals, past churches, cinemas, shops, through hollows and down inclines.

To say that the theme of Tickets, Please is love and its perverse side effects absurdly oversimplifies the situation. The language and the pattern of imagery suggest that what one sex feels toward the other is too complicated to be captured in words. One of Lawrence's great themes is the paradox of mating relations between the sexes. Male lusts for female; the female is outraged when feelings (of love?) are trifled with; female and male, at the same time that they are obviously drawn toward one another, battle cruelly and brutally. What do they battle over?

What is the significance of the physical strength of the females in this story? The only male in this story is, by definition (i.e., because he is not off fighting in the war) a cripple, less than a whole man. Does he represent men in contemporary urbanized society? (The husband of Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover is also a cripple). The girls in the story "fear nobody--everybody fears them." What, we may ask, would the author have the relationship between male and female be if the protagonist had not been one of the "young men, a little crippled...who creep forward in terror?"

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Session(s)

> My task is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel--it is, before all, to make you see. That--and no more, and it is everything.
>
> Joseph Conrad

The topic of this session is an extended study of the theme of initiation in Joseph Conrad's The Secret Sharer.

Suggested Film

As the sea figures prominently in The Secret Sharer, the film entitled The Sea: Background for Literature may be shown. The following is a description of the film.

The Sea: Background for Literature

Presents Joe Palmer, the third mate aboard the Exeter, as he rests in his cabin and looks over much of the literature inspired by the sea. Uses dramatized narration to show scenes from works of such authors as Rudyard Kipling, Richard Dana, James Cook, Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Nordhoff, James Norman Hall, Herman Melville, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Alfred Lord Tennyson. A 1958 production. Color. 10 minutes.

Study Questions

1. In what ways is the length of this story appropriate

or inappropriate to what is being related? What would change if one tried to make it a novel or a short story?

2. Describe the speaker. Why? How long ago did the incidents narrated occur? What attributes can you infer that he has? To whom does he seem to be talking?

3. What has this story of a ship captain in the tropics to do with everyone's life? Why are you "teaching" it? By the way, what does it mean "to teach a story"?)

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Session(s)

The topic for this hour is an extended discussion of death in Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Ilych.

> ...he had lived without any sense that he had a self or was a self. He had assumed all the roles that respectable society had assigned to him: he had been a public official, a husband, a father. But a self he had never been, not between the time of his childhood (when there had been a little glow of pleasure and affection) and the time of his dying. Only at the point of his extinction is selfhood revealed to him.... Yet in his awful dissolution, Ivan Ilych is more fully a human being than he had ever been in the days of his armored unawareness of himself. And it is when he has been tortured into an awareness of his own self that he can at last, for the first time, begin to recognize the actuality of other selves, that of the young peasant Gerasim and that of his poor sad son.
>
> Lionel Trilling

Study Questions

1. Is Ivan Ilych a sort of Everyman? Is he better or worse than most people?

2. Enumerate a few of the innumerable ironies (see "Elements" section for definition)--such as, for instance, the fact that it was Ilych's vanity of being on a ladder in the drawing room, putting up drapes (?), that caused, literally, his downfall.

3. Think about and discuss Tolstoy's feeling about his character, Ilych. About humanity in general. Find specific words and sentences to support your view.

4. Describe the marriage of Ilych and find specific sentences to support your view.

5. What is ennui? What is the role of ennui in the story?

6. Does the voice of Tolstoy intrude in the narrative? That is, does he serve as commentator?

D. Some General Strategies for Teaching Short Stories

1. The economy of the short story demands that every word and every part be made to count. Attention to first and last sentences is particularly important.

2. Students should be asked to discuss differences between a film and the story on which it is based. (If they have already viewed the film The Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge and read Bierce's story, they will have done this already.) They might be asked what changes would have to be made in a given story to transfer it to the screen while retaining the original theme.

3. The best and most practical advice for teaching literature (or, perhaps anything else) is given by Jerome Bruner:

> The trick is to find the medium questions that can be answered and that take you somewhere. This is the big job of teachers and textbooks.

It is practical and effective, though difficult, for the teacher to contemplate a given story (or novel or poem) before he assigns it, to formulate a "medium question" that will take the student somewhere (into the story), and to assign that question with the story. That way, the student will read with purpose and direction, and the first discussion of the story, for the next meeting of the class, will be set, directed, and of substance.

Formulating that "medium question" is, itself, difficult and a test of the teacher's own understanding. With any story, as the teacher himself reads it, he should be asking himself, what is my "medium question," one that will take the students somewhere, going to be?

4. It is always instructive, of course to compare works with similar themes. Below are some stories grouped by theme. All are contained in a recent collection, Carpenter and Neumeyer's Elements of Fiction (1974). You may want to refer to this text.

Initiation, etc.

William Faulkner, Barn Burning
Ngugi wa Throng'o, A Meeting in the Dark
Julio Corttázar, End of the Game

Love, etc.

Joyce Carol Oates, Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been
Doris Lessing, The Black Madonna
The Bible, "The Book of Ruth"
Peter Taylor, Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time

Death, etc.

James Baldwin, Going to Meet the Man
Stephen Crane, The Snake
Rudyard Kipling, The Gardener
Yukio Mishima, Patriotism
Eudora Welty, A Still Moment

(Note: The "etc." in the typical headings implies that any good story deals with more than one theme. For example, Barth's Night Sea Journey involves both love and sex; Mishima's Patriotism, love and death; and Corttázar's End of the Game, death and initiation.)

E. Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Monroe C. Beardsley, Robert W. Daniel, and Glenn H. Leggett, eds., Theme and Form, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).

Organized thematically and analytically, with a generous inclusion of short stories.

2. Jack Carpenter and Peter Neumeyer, eds., Elements of Fiction (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., 1974).

An introduction to the short story noteworthy for the range of the nationality of the authors included as well as for commentary and story questions (instructor's manual is available).

3. E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1954).

A short, easy, pleasantly written introduction to plot, character, and other major aspects (as the title says) of special interest because it is one of the few theoretical books written by a successful and practicing novelist.

4. Irving Howe, ed., Classics of Modern Fiction (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968).

Eight short novels, including four studied in this course (Notes from Underground, The Death of Ivan Ilych, The Secret Sharer, and The Metamorphosis), with excellent commentaries.

5. Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (New York: The Viking Press).

The editor of Henry James's letters and of some of his novels, discusses the craft of novel writing, the novel as art form.

6. Richard L. McGuire, Passionate Attention: An Introduction to Literary Study (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1973).

Introduction to literary approaches, literary "ways of seeing," and brief application to several short poems.

7. Studies in Short Fiction (Newberry College, Newberry, South Carolina).

A journal addressing itself exclusively to articles and discussion of the short story.

8. Lionel Trilling, The Experience of Literature (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

Valuable for selections and commentaries. Includes section on fiction. Referred to in other units.

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F. Additional Audio Visual Suggestions

Any number of films from the series titled Short Story Showcase, e.g.:

1. Dr. Heidegger's Experiment. A dramatization of Hawthorne's famous short story. Color. 22 minutes.

2. A Discussion of Dr. Heidegger's Experiment by Clifton Fadiman. Color. 11 minutes.

3. The Lady or the Tiger. Dramatizes Frank R. Stockton's famous story about a princess who must decide the fate of her lover. 11 minutes.

4. A Discussion of Frank Stockton's The Lady or the Tiger by Clifton Fadiman. Color. 10 minutes.

5. The Lottery. A dramatization of Shirley Jackson's chilling masterpiece. Color. 19 minutes.

6. A Discussion of Shirley Jackson's The Lottery. Color. 10 minutes.

7. A Discussion of Ernest Hemingway's My Old Man. Color. 10 Minutes.

8. Chickamauga. Film adaptation of Ambrose Bierce's Civil War story.

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NOTE: Coast Community College District has produced a videotaped program to accompany this unit. It is available in videocassette recording from the Great Plains National Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

PART THREE: IMAGES OF SELF IN THE ARTS

X. IMAGES OF ALIENATION

The Dimensions of Alienation

Alienation is essentially a state of disvalue, the subject of a negative judgment; and if we inquire what substantive values it denies, we shall find them respectively to be (1) unity (as with Hegel), (2) organicity (as with Marx), and (3) immediacy (as with Tonnies). In every case the use of the term implies an axiological dualism, a valuational contrariety, and the essential pairs in this case are...three: (1) the unified or integrated versus the divided or fragmented; (2) the organic, the sensed, the human, versus the mechanical, the abstract, the thing-like; and (3) the immediate and the feelingful versus the impersonal and the distant. *Fragmentation*, *mechanization*, *distantiation*, are the three dimensions of alienation, and every usage, however remote, will in some sense presuppose, or explicate, or explore one or more of these crucial aspects.

Albert William Levi

On Goya's Artistic Genius

With Goya the artist's genius becomes absolute and responsible to no one. The inspired artist no longer carries out the will of God. The baroque artist finds dignity and beauty in things in themselves because they bear testimony to God. For Goya the human figure, the washing, and the basket are all trivial in themselves and become significant only insofar as he concerns himself with them. The artist becomes exalted--but homeless. Every talent needs some subject matter, some content that it can realize; this subject is henceforth to be chosen by the artist himself and what he chooses is his concern alone.

Theodore Hetzer

On William Blake's Achievement

Blake was one of the first modern artists not only to articulate fully man's loss of spiritual community but also to seek an answer both in the communal myths of the past and the personal poetic symbols of the present. He sought to recreate for men out of a *personal* vision a communal vision both new and old.

Hazard Adams

On Man and Artist Today

...man now realizes that he is an accident, that he is a completely futile being, that he has to play ou the game without reason. I think that, even when Velasquez was painting, even when Rembrandt was painting, in a peculiar way they were still, whatever their attitude to life, slightly conditioned by certain types of religious possibilities, which man now, you could say, has had completely cancelled out for him. ...[It's] going to become much more difficult for the artist, because he must really deepen the game to be any good at all.

Francis Bacon

On Melville's "Bartleby"

...the self-denial he practices has been instituted in the interest of his freedom, a sad, abstract, metaphysical freedom but the only one he can aspire to. In the degree that he diminishes his self, he is thus less an alienated self: his will is free, he cannot be compelled. ...Bartleby, by his gradual self-annihilation, annihilates the social order as it exists within himself.

Lionel Trilling

Design

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth
Like a white piece of rigid satan cloth--
Assorted characters of death and blight
Mixed ready to begin the morning right,
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth--
A snow-drop spider, a flower like froth,
And dead wings carried like a paper kite,
What had that flower to do with being white,
The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?
What brought the kindred spider to that height,
Then steered the white moth thither in the night?
What but design of darkness to appall?--
If design govern in a thing so small.

Robert Frost

IX. IMAGES OF ALIENATION

Overview

Among the more powerful and compelling images of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are those which embody the experience of alienation--the alienation of man from God, from tradition, from community, from work, from nature and from himself. The imaginative structure of feeling characteristic of alienation can be investigated in writers and painters both old and new. In this unit, poems by William Blake, a novella by Herman Melville, and paintings by Goya and Francis Bacon will be examined as emblems of alienation. Not only the pain and anguish of alienation are presented but also its affirmative aspects, such aspects forming a bridge to the following unit on images of acceptance and celebration. Accordingly, this unit and the ones that follow are to be taken dialectically, offering fundamental possibilities of aesthetic choice and interpretation.

Objectives

1. To provide insight into the context of values in which selected modern writers and artists have fashioned their visions and images.

2. To provide further opportunities to practice the skills of critical analysis.

3. By highlighting some affirmative aspects of alienation, to provide a bridge to the following unit on images of acceptance and celebration.

Assignments

Although appropriate readings abound, an excellent reading assignment for this unit is Herman Melville's Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street. Melville's Billy Budd also holds appeal for modern students, concerned as they are by the conflict between the institution (and the law) and the individual. If a contemporary not-too-long reading seems more advisable, the teacher might assign Allen Sillitoe's The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. If more than one reading can be assigned, another good choice would be Thomas Mann's Tonio Kroger, a novella which revolves around a theme that obsessed the great German novelist: the necessary alienation of the artist and imaginative person in a bourgeois industrialized society.

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A. Introduction: Alienation--Intellectual and Aesthetic Perspectives
B. Suggestions for Teaching
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E. Appendices:
    1. Music of Alienation
    2. Songs of Leonard Cohen
    3. Additional Poems by William Blake

A. Introduction: Alienation--Intellectual and Aesthetic Perspectives

It is a commonplace of contemporary social and cultural commentary to cite the experience of alienation as a fundamental fact of modern existence. Alienation, it is said, is almost total in modern society: it pervades man's relations to his work and society as well as his relations with others and to himself.

Yet the experience is not a peculiarly modern experience. What we call "alienation" is a form of the pain men have always felt to some extent, in all cultures and in all ages, whenever a sense of separateness has been felt, or there seems lack of identity with persons, institutions, and the world. Like Hamlet, alienated man has often felt a stranger in his own country, a stranger to his family and even to his own feelings. As such, alienation is one of the universal themes in the history of the arts.

This being the case, it is not surprising that the term alienation and the concept occur in ancient writers and later in the writings of Wycliff, Calvin, Burke, and St. Simon, not to mention Luther, Goethe, and Wieland.[1] Yet, while the experience of alienation may be something of a cultural universal, there is good reason for holding that the idea of alienation is a nineteenth-century development. William Barrett's Alienated Man gives an interesting and readable account of this cultural manifestation.

The writers and artist examined in this unit were chosen because they seem to grasp intuitively this contemporary awareness. They are painfully conscious of fragmentation in a world dominated by trade, commerce, science and technology. In light of the break with intellectual, religious, and artistic tradition, they also realize the necessity of creating as the artist Francis Bacon says of his work, "as closely to one's own nervous system as one possibly can." Each of them stands at the end of one historical era and at the beginning of another and tries in an individual way, to continue to create in a world without God or purpose, in a world that has shattered the sense of community and dehumanized work, in a world full of terror and violence. The oft-quoted lines from Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" apply with particular force to our own historical situation: "And we are here as on a darkening plain / swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight...." W.B. Yeats, one of the greatest of the modern poets, expresses the sense of fragmentation and alienation hauntingly in "The Second Coming":

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[1] Albert William Levi, "Existentialism and the Alienation of Man," in Phenomenology and Existentialism, eds., E.N. Lee and M. Mandelbaum (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1967).

> "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity."

B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

As the first topic of the unit examines expression of alienation in the poetry of William Blake--and William Wordsworth--class work might begin with a showing of the film The Vision of William Blake:

> Through a comprehensive use of Blake's books and pictures, the film illustrates the poet-painter's struggle to free his soul

from a bondage that he felt to be the state of man. The film, produced to celebrate the poet's bicentenary, was photographed in the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Tate Gallery, London, and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Produced by the Blake Film Trust. Color. 27 minutes.

For the remainder of the class, attention may center on the images of alienated life presented in Blake's "London," or in Wordsworth's "Tintern Alley" and "Residence in London," the seventh book of his autobiographical poem The Prelude. Raymond Williams comments that Blake and Wordsworth provide a "prelude to alienation" which is the more significant as "the emphasis on alienation is as an experience, and a connection of this experience with a pattern of social change."[2]

In periods of rapid social change and upheaval--as in the period of the French Revolution when Blake and Wordsworth were writing--allegiances break down, long-held ideas and doctrines are questioned, and thinking people feel cast adrift.

Central to the insights of Blake and Wordsworth is their perception that human alienation was directly connected with new social conditions, especially new forms of labor, increasingly personal social relations and an inhumane economic system. What Blake perceived as intolerable in capitalist production was the separation of the laborer from the product of his labor by a heartless system. Blake further associated the rise of industrialism with the development of militarism: "Where any view of Money exists, Art cannot be Carried on, but War only."

Blake's brief and powerful poem "London" presents the whole spectrum of alienation: poverty, war, perverted desire. Man has a twofold task: to recover himself and the city.

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[2] Raymond Williams, "Prelude to Alienation," Dissent, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Summer 1964), p.303.

Wordsworth's observations stem from the standpoint of the country observer who had learned to live according to the laws of Nature and regarded the city as destructive of good, natural impulses and instincts. The crowd further appeared to him as a swarm and mass, a body of alienated relationships that ultimately alienated the self that was caught up in it. Contrary to the notions that city air makes men free, Wordsworth and Blake felt it imprisons them. The tendency of Wordsworth, in contrast to Blake, is not revolutionary; rather the way to recover the self and harmony is through a return to Nature, where, as he wrote in "Tintern Abbey," ..."I have felt a presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts...."

There are, of course, many contemporary poets who express this sense of alienation from a society that is hostile to man's real inclinations. Unfortunately, significant contemporary poets--Eliot, Auden, Pound, Mac Leish, Wallace Stevens, Robert Lowell--are difficult for a beginning student to read because of the 20th century poet's turning away from what he regards as the worn-out idiom and ideology of Victorian poetry--an instance in itself of the alienation of the poet in our society. Yet there are several American poets who use traditional poetic forms to express a typically contemporary sense of alienation. Among them are Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, and Edgar Lee Masters (in his Spoon River Anthology). Every teacher would do well to assign poems from the two New England writers. Robinson's work is especially powerful since one of his abiding interests was the "loser" in our society, the Miniver Cheevys.

Session(s)

Francesco Goya and Francis Bacon

Francesco Goya

Slides of Goya's work, arranged chronologically and accompanied by biographical material, are suggested for this section. An effective presentation could be made by showing the slides fairly rapidly along with a running account of Goya's life, pausing at times to engage the students in discussion of a particular painting, or comparing contrasting works.

Goya spent the greater part of his youth desperately trying to gain some kind of recognition, not so much to further a career as to get a start in one. Realizing that influence alone could give him a start, he married the sister of the prominent painter Bayeu. Finally, in his forties, he got his chance. He began painting tapestry cartoons for the royal factory in Madrid.

Suggested prints or slides

Portrait of Josefa Bayeu, 1798. The tapestry cartoons are pleasant chronicles of Madrid life, charming, with no hint of the depths of despair and cynicism which would invade his work later on.

Self Portrait, 1775
The Parasol, 1777
The Greasy Pole, 1787
The Mannikin, 1791
The Meadow of San Isidro, 1788

Only The Mannikin suggests the dark side of Goya's nature--his ambivalent attitude toward female figures in his art, often seen in the later Caprichos. In this painting, women toy with men.

These women, or majas, were glamorous figures in Madrid, girls of the street. While they are young, Goya shows them as beautiful, sometimes treacherous. When they are old they become witches and procuresses, figures of evil.

Suggested Prints or Slides

Caprichos: Till Death, 1799
The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters
Pretty Teacher!
How They Pluck Her!
All Will Fall

In 1792, Goya suffered a long, nearly fatal illness which left him stone deaf at the age of forty-six and exacerbated his feeling of isolation from the society around him. Up until this time, he had aspired to nothing more than conventional success and competence. But in the depression following his illness, he began to paint compositions of darker meaning, such as his painting of a madhouse. He began work on a series of etchings called Caprichos, a savage attack on a corrupt Spain in which a vicious and vulgar queen ruled through her lover, the prime minister, and the King, her husband, was befuddled and stupid.

The Caprichos satirized human folly, deceit, and superstition. So obvious was this little commentary that Goya hastily withdrew the prints almost as soon as they were published, saving himself from the dreaded Inquisition by donating the plates to the king for the royal collection.

The success Goya had so desperately fought for was his. He was sought after by the great of Spanish society for protrait painting.

Additional Suggested prints or slides:

Portrait of Charles IV and his Family, 1810

Portrait of the Duchess of Alba

He became the lover of the Duchess of Alba. In her portrait she wears two rings, one reading "Alba," the other "Goya". She points to the ground where "Goya alone" is written in the sand. (The child in the drawing was her adopted favorite, a little black girl.)

When Napoleon invaded Spain, Goya, like most Spanish liberals, regarded the event as a deliverance from the hateful Bourbons. However, the Napoleonic policy of letting the French armies live off the land caused such outrage and suffering that the people rose against the troops, and a long, bloody guerilla war began. Goya began his second great series of etchings to indict the French occupation, as well as man's infinite capacity for cruelty.

Suggested Prints or Slides

Disaster of War: Why?

And Nor do These

Wonderful Heroism! Against Dead Men!

Bury Them and be Silent

With Reason or Without

The Third of May, 1814

In the end, the French were driven out. But the restoration of a Bourbon king with the same stupidities and oppressions, even the restoration of the Inquisition, created bitterness and disillusionment.

In the Disasters Goya went beyond outrage into a melancholic, intense celebration of suffering and violence. He continued this theme in a series of bullfight etchings called Tauromachy.

Finally in the *Disparates*, Goya steps into the world of the non-rational, the hidden impulses of man.

Suggested Prints or Slides

Disparates: *A Way to Fly*
Strange Folly
Matrimonial Folly
The Horse as Abductor

In his seventies, deaf, suffering from depressions and premonitions of further illness, Goya retired to a country house called with grim humor the "Quinta Del Sordo," House of the Deaf Man. Working in oils directly on walls, he created the "Black Paintings"--work intended only for himself. They stand as a record of human cruelty, folly, stupidity, physical ugliness, and depravity. For example, two men are shown fighting even though they are sinking into a quagmire; Judith raises her murderous knife; old men gum their gruel.

Suggested Prints and Slides

Saturn Devouring his Children
The Fates
Pilgrimage of San Isidro
Two Women Laughing
Witches' Sabbath--Compare with the *Witches' Sabbath* 1798, 20 years earlier
Two Men Fighting

Goya, it may be said, was even more of an "outsider" than was Blake. His was a bottomless pessimism. Thus in one of his *Disaster* etchings he pictures a wolf writing "Wretched humanity, the fault is yours."

Still, Blake and Goya's art show common elements: 1)savage denunciation of the society in which they lived; 2)an ambivalence toward women; and 3)a pre-Freudian intuition of the non-rational in human nature. They both reveal a characteristic Romantic trait of artistic genius--a sense of exaltation but homelessness.

Attention should also be directed to a 20th-century English painter, Francis Bacon, who self-consciously accepts alienation as a basic aspect of man's situation today. The following film on Bacon, or selected slides with accompanying discussion, can be used to good effect. The following is a description of the film.

Francis Bacon Paintings 1944-1962

> Francis Bacon's paintings have realized a vision of human predicament unique in modern art both in violence and in grandeur. This film attempts to approach the meaning of his vision through the imaginative and emotional effect of his work. Produced for the Arts Council of Great Britain and Marlborough Fine Arts Ltd. by Samaritan Films. Color. 11 minutes.

The English poet and critic Stephen Spender remarks that Bacon's ideas "may well have as great an influence on painting during the last quarter of the present century as the critical writings of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot had on poetry during the 1920's and 1930's." (Times Literary Supplement, March 21, 1975.) Francis Bacon Interviewed by David Sylvester (New York, 1975), helps us to an understanding of the artist.

As he shows slides, the teacher, if he or she likes, can relate Bacon's life to what they portray and suggest. The violence his paintings do to the human form so as to portray intense suffering can be related, in part, to his experiences in Ireland, England, and the continent prior to and during World War II. Although Bacon is supposed to be a descendant of the great earlier English writer-philosopher whose name he bears, his father was a horse trainer. He grew up in Ireland, one of five children. He had no formal art training. "I had no upbringing at all," he said. "I used simply to work on my father's farm near Dublin." Eventually he went away to school and later on in London worked as an interior decorator. On his own, he studied the paintings of the old masters.

An exhibition of Picasso's works in Paris in 1926 decided his role as a painter. He went back to London after seeing the exhibition, determined to paint. His work over the years evolved slowly, and it was not until after the war--a period of some twenty years--that he emerged as a painter with a mature style. When asked why his paintings are so ambiguous, Bacon replied that modern man demands a kind of short-hand, the grin without the cat.

Suggested Prints or Slides

These paintings have been selected so as to begin with those which are easiest to grasp and end with those more difficult to accept.

Study for a Portrait, 1953. This painting is an ironic imitation of Velazquez's celebrated painting of Innocent X. The pope is seated on a throne, hands gripping the arms, his mouth open in a scream. He appears to be roped off, or barred away, by golden bands. His throne is golden too, with sharp ends that jab into the purple of the background. Yellow and purple are color complements and set up the great tension. The purple, cold and dark and intensified by the vertical fracturing of the background and figure by dark and light bands, casts a morbid glow. The figure appears to be disintegrating before the viewer's eyes.

Pope II, 1951. The characteristic purple is darker and colder, and the figure becomes blue. The pope is on his throne, screaming, his figure pushed off center toward the lower right hand corner--making for tense stress, in the composition. The background suggests the floor of a cathedral interior and is fractured vertically. The figure is not fractured, although the paint on the face has been smoothed to give it a rubbery appearance. A series of quick, sketchy brush strokes line the figure, which is walled off not only by white bands but also by white lines forming a box around him, apparently of glass and isolating him completely.

Study for a Portrait, 1953. A man in a blue business suit looks directly out at the viewer, his mouth open in a toothy grimace. He is sitting on what could be a bed, or a couch, but the bars behind the bed suggest a hospital, even a prison. The bars isolate the man, as does the box surrounding the pope. Cold, dull colors of the figure and background, along with chalky flesh tones, create the effect of impending disaster.

Man in Blue V, 1954. This painting is extremely dark--dark blue and black. Just about the only lighted objects are the man's chalky face and shirt front. Sitting at a table in coat and tie, he stares balefully at the viewer, completely siolated in his transparent box Part of the background is fragmented, but fragmentation does not extend to the figure. The face is mutilated by brushstrokes, emphasizing the one clear feature--a dark, staring eye.

Study of a Baboon, 1953. An insubstantial baboon sits in a tree that is barely sketched. The only substantial thing about the baboon is his gaping mouth, his sharp teeth accented against the dark cavity

cavity of his mouth. The dull purplish colors of the baboon contrast with the beige field. He is walled off in part of the canvas by a wire fence. A quality of nervosity is created by the twisting of the tree branches and the diagonal jabs of paint which suggest a field of grass.

Two Figures, 1953. In a strong contrast of light and dark, two male figures on a white bed pause in combat as they stare out of the canvas. Their features are blurred, and one has his mouth open in a toothy grimace. The sheets are indicated by crude white brushstrokes. The cold, dark blue background is fractured vertically, and thin white lines indicate the glass box which walls off the wrestlers. Arena or a cage?

Painting, 1946. This painting is almost done entirely in shades of red and pink, against which the figure of the man under his umbrella forms a violent bluish-black silhouette. The man sits nonchalantly, walled in by circular bars, while behind him there hang sides of beef crucified from the ceiling. Diagonal lines in the background echo the diagonals formed by the arms of beef and point the eye toward the central figure. The upper part of the face is lost in the shadow of the circular umbrella. The curve of the white collar below the face completes the circle of the shadow, concentration the attention of the viewer on the man's open mouth with white teeth. Above the mouth smudged red brushstrokes suggest blood.

Three Studies for a Crucifixion, 1962. The theme of crucifixion is treated by Bacon repeatedly, although he is not a religious man. This triptych employs many of his obsessive devices: figures in an enclosed area; enigmatic, staring men; a male figure on a bed; sides of beef. The paintings are predominantly orange and red.

The central figures are thrust into bold relief, white, blackish blue, and pinkish red. The space within each painting is circular, suggesting an arena by its shape.

In the first painting, two men stare outward, and two indeterminate shapes suggest sides of beef. In the center painting, a pink figure writhes on a bed which has been placed in the direct center of the painting. The figure is brutally distorted and the violent brush strokes, as well as the spattered red paint, contrast with the rest of the painting, which is smoothly and meticulously executed. In the center of the third painting, suspended from above, a side of beef undulates downward. This curving line, along with the contrast in color (and the oppressingly hot quality of the colors) heighten the sense of agony and horror.

Bacon's paintings go beyond suffering and pain to inject an unwholesome element of sadism. The alienation of the figures is constantly reinforced by their placement in enclosures or circumscribed spaces, such as a bed, where their pain takes on overtones of sacrifice. The blurring of the human image with that of animals, even dead animals, signifies a tormented and haunting view of humankind.

Session(s)

The topic is alienation as expressed in literature. For the sake of illustration, the work to be examined is Herman Melville's Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street. Students should be assigned the story beforehand--or whatever other story the teacher chooses--and discussion should center on the theme of alienation. Since an effective film version is available, most teachersmay want to assign

Bartleby. Use of the film and the story also provides an opportunity for students to discuss elements distinctive to the two media.

Bartleby, of course, has become a classic statement of human alienation--a statement that holds great appeal for students in the 1970's. The self is seen asserting its will to absolute freedom and in so doing triggers its own destruction.

Description of film:

Bartleby (Short Story Showcase)

> Professional actors dramatize Melville's allegorical tale of Bartleby, the man who "preferred not to." An analysis of the sotry is presented by Dr. Charles Van Doren in the companion film *A Discussion of Bartleby*. A 1969 production. Color. 28 minutes.

Although there may not be time to show both Bartleby and the filmed *A Discussion of Bartleby* in class, instructors may want to order both films. A viewing of Charles Van Doren's interpretation may help initiate class discussion:

A Discussion of Bartleby (Short Story Showcase)

> Using scenes from the companion film *Bartleby*, Dr. Charles Van Doren analyzes the moral dilemma which Bartleby poses for the lawyer and concludes that the key to the story is the Biblical commandment "that ye love one another." A 1969 production. Color. 10 minutes.

Other Readings

Melville's *Bartleby* does not of course exhaust the possibilities for a study of alienation in fiction. Of particular interest to Black community college students are writings by Black novelists, playwrights and poets--e.g., James Baldwin, LeRoi Jones, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright. For that matter, the theme of alienation from the main currents of American society can be found in fiction with an ethnic base: e.g., Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, Pietro di Donato's

Christ in Concrete, James T. Farrell's Studs Lonigan.

Stories and novels that project other kinds of alienation are also of interest to classes--e.g., Kafka's A Hunger-Artist (who recalls the fate of Gregor Samsa in The Metamorphosis), Albert Camus' The Stranger, Ernest Hemingway's Soldier's Home, William Faulkner's The Bear, Nathaniel West's Miss Lonelyhearts, John Steinbeck's Tortilla Flat--to name only a few with immediate appeal.

C. Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Francis Bacon Interviewed by David Sylvester (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975).

An insightful collection of four interviews done over twelve years which sheds considerable light on Bacon's life, his work, and critical ideas.

2. Monroe C. Beardsley, Robert W. Daniel, and Glenn H. Leggett, eds., Theme and Form: An Introduction to Literature (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).

Organized around the themes of early years, man and woman, the world around us, the city, individual and society, the scientific enterprise, arts and the man, peace and war, the nature of good and evil, achievement and realization, skepticism and faith, and at the end of life. Sections on the city and the individual and society could be used to enlarge the examination of Blake, Wordsworth, and Melville in this unit.

3. Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, Jr., eds., The Modern Tradition: Backgrounds of Modern Literature (new York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

An excellent source book organized around the topics of symbolism, realism, nature, cultural history, the unconscious, myth, self-consciousness, existence, and faith. Sections on symbolism and self-consciousness are especially pertinent to this and other units in the course.

4. Eric and Mary Josephson, eds., Man Alone: Alienation in Modern Society (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962).

Essays are grouped under the topical headings of Alienation and Identity, Work and Leisure, Mass Culture, Politics, Science and War, Social Isolation, Rebels, Deviants, and Retreatists.

5. Fred Licht, ed., Goya in Perspective (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., L973).

From the artists in perspective series the general editor of which is H.W. Janson. Major essays by such writers as Gawtier, Baudelaire, Lopez-Rey, and Ernest Gombrich.

D. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. Films:

Chicamauga: Ou La Riviere De La Mort is a particularly interesting and eerie film, as it pictures a small boy who has wandered on to the battlefield of Chicamauga, and continues to play, oblivious to the suffering of wounded and dying men. This total blockage of empathy and understanding puzzles students and challenges them to look beyond the literal surface of the story for symbolic meaning.

The Lottery, based on Shirley Jackson's frightening story, runs only thirteen minutes, is easily understood, and picks up the theme of ritual sacrifice suggested by earlier works. Certainly, it is a good example of the dehumanization of relationships.

Blind Gary Davis can be seen in twenty minutes. It pictures the black folk singer in his home. As he sings "Death Don't Have no Mercy in This Land," the camera moves into the streets of Harlem, showing people in appropriately alienated postures.

Dutchman, a powerful, sophisticated black drama, is highly evocative and challenging to students. Its length, however, would make it the single object of study for the entire unit. It is suggested, however, that this film be considered as an option.

Kienholz on Exhibit. The film presents an amplification of the theme of alienation and pain; it offers interesting insights into unusual form and materials in sculpture.

Magritte or the Object Lesson. This sensitive film of the surrealist artist and his work might be used as an option to the slide presentation suggested in the text. This would be effective if a written short story were used for class discussion instead of a dramatic film.

2. Suggested Paintings:

Suggested additional art works selected for this unit are all from the twentieth century. They are unlike Bacon's paintings in style. While Bacon is emotional, even passionate, these are cool, detached, intellectual. Paint is applied with exactness and precision. No brushstrokes are vissible. The personal hand of the artist has been obliterated to whatever extent this is possible.

George Tooker, Government Bureau, 1956.

Giorgio de Chirico, Nostalgia for the Infinite, 1914

Giorgio de Chirico, The Disquieting Muses, 1917.

Rene Magritte, Golconda, 1961.

Rene Magritte, Delusions of Grandeur.

Rene Magritte, The Castle of the Pyrenees.

Rene Magritte, Portrait.

Rene Magritte, The Menaced Assassin.

Robert Bechtie, '61 Pontiac, 1968-69. This is photo-realism of the late '60's and early '70's, in which paintings are intended to look like photographs, and frequently are. This painting is particularly successful in achieving the anti-art, impersonal quality of a posed snapshot.

Duane Hanson, Riot, 1968. This sculpture group is composed of figures built up from plaster casts taken from living models and reinforced with fiberglass.

Duane Hanson, Portrait of Melvin Kaufmann, 1971.

Ernest Trova, Study, Falling Man, No.77, 1963. The human figure is used here to suggest parts of a machine, and the stencil-like lettering intensifies the impression.

Enrique Castro-Cid, Sylvia's Invention, 1963. The human being as medical diagram.

3. Suggested Musical Compositions:

Igor Stravinsky, Rite of Spring
Arnold Schoenberg, Pierrot Lunaire
Alban Berg, Wozzeck
Eleanor Rigby
Leonard Cohen, "Joan of Arc" and "Diamonds in the Mine" from the album "Songs of Love and Hate"

(See Appendices for notes)

E. Appendices:

1. Music of Alienation
2. Songs of Leonard Cohen
3. Additional Poems by William Blake

1. Music of Alienation

The dramatic changes in musical language that took place during the second decade of the twentieth century, the same decade that saw the First World War and the resulting collapse of nineteenth-century idealism, were also a reflection of the alienation and cynicism of the times. A turning away from the Romantic melodicism in music became a characteristic part of the idiom of most of the leading composers in the Western world in the 20th century.

Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, first performed in 1913, and Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire, composed in 1912, cannot be listened to in the same way as other music written before 1910. Completely different from each other in their use of the new atonal language--music which has no tonal center--they both turned their backs upon the musical philosophy which had prevailed before them since the earliest music that we know anything about. The violence, despair, alienation, inherent in the principal language of most of the art music of the twentieth century will be apparent to all.

Students should listen to the "Sacrifical Dance" at the end of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring and three or four of the short songs from Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire. The former, from a ballet, is the dance of a virgin who is to die in primitive fertility rites; the latter, the ravings of a lunatic. If more examples are desired, Berg's opera, Wozzeck, composed in the early 1920's also in atonal language, is recommended. Opera recordings are issued with complete texts and summaries of the plot in printed form accompanying the recordings. Students should be given a brief outline of the depressing story about a soldier destroyed by sordid circumstances--an allegory of contemporary alienation.

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2. Songs of Leonard Cohen

The preoccupation with pain and painful sacrifice in Leonard Cohen's songs may be linked to a similar concern in the work of Francis Bacon. After listening to Cohen's "Joan of Arc," the students should consider the mood created by the song, and the means by which it is established: the quality of Cohen's voice, the accompaniment, the tempo, the melodic simplicity which suggest an archaic ballad.

Students might then consider that kind of statement Cohen is making in this dialogue between Joan of Arc and the fire. What kind of person is Joan of Arc represented to be, and how do we know? What does the lyric tell us about the sense of alienation of some of today's youth?

What qualities do the images of the fire create? Aggression? Passion? Not only does the poem create a tension between heat and cold, but between the reserved, "cold" quality of the girl. In what ways might this poem suggest a ritual sacrifice?

Cohen's "Diamonds in the Mine" might also be played-- and without comment. It is an instance of black humor. Bacon has already made the point that "there are no chocolates in the boxes anymore."

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NOTE: Miami-Dade Community College has produced a videotaped program to accompany this unit. It is available in videocassette recording from the Great Plains National Instructional Television Library, Box 80669, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

X. IMAGES OF ACCEPTANCE AND CELEBRATION

The test of civilization is the power of drawing the most benefit out of cities.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

History seems to show that cultural achievement and social living flourish best in the organic community of manageable size: Periclean Athens, Medician Florence, the Venetian Republic of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Baroque Vienna under Maria Theresa, where painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and drama as well as reading and good talk, flowered within an environment of social cohesion and civic concern. Urban life has always been the fountainhead of culture.... Not until the urban environment is once again manageable in size, walkable, proud of its monuments and open spaces, and the locus of a revived cultural concern will an American future be secure.

Albert William Levi

X. IMAGES OF ACCEPTANCE AND CELEBRATION

Overview

This unit is designed to suggest that, taken in historical perspective, manifestations of alienation in art are indicative of the spirit and function of art in all ages. Art also affirms values, as in seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting, the culture of Renaissance Florence, the painting of Revolutionary France, etc.

Objectives

1. To indicate how art reflects and affirms values found in a) the objects and affairs of everyday life; b) nature; c) civic monuments.

2. To show how art and society are related in given periods.

Suggested Reading assignments

1. Joseph Wood Krutch, "A Source of Fear and Joy," originally printed in Life, December 22, 1961; reprinted in Monroe C. Beardsley, Robert W. Daniel, Glenn H. Leggett, eds., Theme and Form - An Introduction to Literature, Fourth Ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975, pp. 91-96.)

2. Kenneth Clark, Civilization (Anchor Books, 1969), Chapter 4, "Man--The Measure of All Things," pp. 89-116.

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Contents

A. Introduction: Alienation is Not Enough
B. Suggestions for Teaching
C. An Alternative Strategy
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
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A. Introduction: Alienation is Not Enough

The present unit, though it is designed to stand on its own, was conceived as forming a companion piece to the unit on alienation. This was not done only to provide symmetry in course design or "equal time." Alienation, as a human condition with its attendant suffering--real or affected--is certainly very much with us. But students should be reminded that alienation and the lingo that has grown up around it have become self-conscious and profitable posturing, a modish cloak donned by those who wish to announce that they are in tune with the times, are "with it."

The sense of alienation is nowhere more evident than in the arts. Some contemporary artists feel alienated by definition, separated from a society which is crass, insensitive, materialistic.

In an earlier unit, it was noted that the "separateness" of the artist is a theme that runs through modern literature. It is the subject of Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks, as well as his Tonio Kröger; it is a thematic thread in James Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man; it appears in the fiction of Andre Gide. The fact is that the artist is no longer the voice of an influential segment of his society, nor does he share the prevailing values. Things were not always so. Not more than a century ago, poets were revered as sages and honored as spokesmen who expressed the aspirations of their nations in a generally acceptable idiom--Longfellow in America, Tennyson in England, Hugo in France. The serious poet of our age, however, has no real constituency, with the rare exception of a Robert Frost who composes for and reads a poem at a Presidential inauguration.

Poets like Pound, Eliot,Stevens, William Carlos Williams, Robert Lowell do not command sizable audiences. Their merits and the expression of the spirit of a fragmented society their work contains are inaccessible to broad audiences because of the obscurity, allusiveness and cryptic quality of their language--the result of the conscious throwing off of an outworn poetic diction--as well as by their attracting the coterie.

Ironically even modern poets who deal with popular themes and argue that poetry should be the voice of the people--Whitman, Vachel Lindsay, Sandburg in America, for example--are inaccessible to most modern readers. And not many of our engineers, technologists, or scientists find, as did John Stuart Mill, that poetry supplies sustenance and makes a full life.

Serious novelists of our time appeal only to narrow audiences. They no longer are accepted as spokesmen for a nation or culture, as were Dickens in England, Balzac in France, or Tolstoy in Russia. Students need only be referred to lists of best-selling books that appear in Sunday newspapers to see what kinds of books people are willing to buy. The best sellers are usually non-fiction--with popular psychology and sex compatability manuals often leading the list.

The artist assumes society is an enemy, dedicates himself to shocking, reviling, and discomfiting a docile public composed of members of the despised establishment. The genesis of the peculiar state of affairs is fascinating in itself, but is not the topic of this unit.[1]

What can concern us here are two beliefs associated with this development that have become accepted almost as dogma: a)that the only legitimate role of the artist is to be merciless critic; and b)that the hostility and rage of the contemporary artist are justified because a capitalistic, materialistic, bourgeois society is inherently incompatible with the aspirations of serious art.

If humanistic education is to mean anything, it must help students liberate themselves from cliches, stereotypes and unthinking responses. They should be given an opportunity to earn the right to their opinions by examining other positions. For this reason they should see that "alienation" is not a concept useful in explaining the relationship between artist and society throughout history. This can be done by showing students, in Albert William Levi's words, the context of civic humanism in order to understand "that the popular present-day tributes to 'art as alienation' are extremely limited in their historical reference."[2] Civic humanism is not just one of several contexts that define the position of the artist vis-a-vis society; it is, Levi believes, the most favorable. This is how he describes it:

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[1] For commentaries on the adversary position of the artist today, see Jacques Barzun, The Use and Abuse of Art, The A.W. Mellon Lectures, 1973 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); and Lionel Trilling, Beyond Culture (New York: Viking Press, 1968).

[2] "The Poverty Of the Avante-Garde," The Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol. 8, No. 4 (October 1974), p. 8.

> At its best art functions as an adjunct of humanism--as a reflection of that attitude which is hospitable to the happy, natural, and wholesome enjoyment of the goods of human life in a refined civilization with the accompanying wisdom, temperance, sanity, and balance which the rightfully entails. This is what it was in Medicean Florence, the Venice of Carpaccio and Bellini, and the Dutch seventeenth century.[3]

Accordingly, this unit might very well deal with some aspects of art and life in seventeenth-century Holland and the Florence of the Renaissance. One session might also look at the celebration of nature in poetry and art, with particular emphasis on some contemporary attitudes and their antecedents. In any event, the teacher should start the unit with the near and familiar, i.e., everyday objects and activities, and move to things somewhat outside the student's purview--values in nature and the civic surrounding.

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B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

Celebrations of Everyday Life in Art

A teacher may want to start the unit by showing a film:

Portrait of Holland (Dutch Painting in the Seventeenth Century)

Pictures a variety of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, with shape and scale indicated. Includes work by Jan Steen, Jan van der Heyden, Jacob Ruysdael, Frans Hals, Pieter Claesz, Nicholas van Heussen, and Rembrandt. The musical accompaniment is drawn from seventeenth century music. A 1955 production. Color. 15 minutes.
Other films of a similar kind may also be shown.

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[3] Ibid., p. 5.

After viewing the film, students will examine the ways in which the homely objects of ordinary life are celebrated in a discussion of prints or slides of paintings by Jan Vermeer.

In the course of discussion, the teacher might inform students that in Western culture the great works of art project subjects and themes of great import. The Western tradition has generally looked to the themes of the Old and New Testament--e.g., Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel--or to secular themes of high seriousness for the subject matter of its greatest works. In Oriental art, the opposite is true. In the arts of classical China and Japan, the most ordinary of objects or activities occur as frequently as do momentous subjects in Western art. This difference is the result of the cultural differences that distinguish the Oriental and Occidental world views. Where we have tended to prize grandeur, the classical Chinese prize simplicity; where we have prized painstaking and meticulous composition, the great artists of China and Japan court a controlled and stylized spontaneity. And while we have generally believed that celebration is only fitting for extraordinary events, the classical Chinese believed that any legitimate human activity was worthy of celebration. The following aphorism by the eighth-century Chinese monk, P'ang Chu-shih, concisely expresses this tendency:

> How wondrous this, how mysterious!
> I carry fuel, I draw water.

The Haiku poems of Japan dwell on sharp, single images that are celebrations of everyday life: a cherry blossom floating on the water, a snowdrop on a bough. There is even an element in our own tradition that affirms the commonplace. In medieval England, for instance, a monk laboriously copying a manuscript looked up, saw the first signs of summer outdoors, an exuberantly jotted down

Sumer is ycumen in,
 Lude sing, cuccu
Groweth seed and bloweth med
 And springth the wode nu.

in the margin of his text. The opening lines of the Canterbury Tales contain a joyous welcome to spring. In our own time a poet like Robert Frost records the glory of the everyday natural event--e.g., "After Apple Picking,"--and extracts profound meaning from it. The sentimentalized Saturday Evening Post covers of Norman Rockwell, now enjoying a somewhat campy revival, show the appeal of the ordinary and the non-heroic.

But perhaps the most impressive achievement of this aspect of the tradition is to be found in the seventeenth-century Dutch genre painters, who depict with loving care and remarkable beauty the most unremarkable of occurrences in everyday life. The following account in a popular textbook gives the reader a good notion of the forces that converged to bring about this efflorescence:

> If a visitor to 17th-century Amsterdam--or any of the other sturdy Dutch towns for that matter--looked about for triumphal arches, pretentious palaces, or military monuments, he was doomed to disappointment. In fact,

> if there was anything grand at all about life in the Low Countries, it was its complete commonplaceness. After they had achieved their cherished independence by wresting their country town by town and province by province from the grasp of the Spanish despots, the people organized themselves and their government with a minimum of unity and a maximum of diversity. The Netherlanders had no intention whatsoever of substituting one brand of tyranny for another, much less a domestic variety; and so the land became the United Provinces under a stadtholder, or governor. Let their English rivals call them the "united bogs"; their muddy swamps and marshlands were poor things, but at least they were their own. Their wars of independence, geographical isolation, constant struggle against the encroachments of the sea, dour climate, seafaring economy, Calvinist Protestantism, and individualistic temperaments conspired with all the other circumstances of Dutch life to focus the center of interest in the home. A Dutchman's home was not even his castle; it was just his solid, comfortable, pla[illegible] brick house. Instead of the cult of majesty, hi[illegible] the cult of the home.[1]

The land was prosperous and the burghers loved comfort and pleasant surrounding. And, by one of those quirks or accidents that mark certain periods of history, there was no dearth of talent, especially in the art of painting.

The fine arts, particularly painting, were an integral part of daily life in the seventeenth-century Netherlands. Pictures were regularly commissioned and purchased by a broad spectrum of the population which, to judge from the paintings of the period, must have had a taste equal to its appetite.[2] One would be just as likely to find fine art adorning the walls of a wealthy merchant's house, a poorhouse, a public building or a bakery.

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[1] William Fleming, Arts and Ideas, 3rd ed. New York: (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., n.d.), p. 368

[2] In 1560 Antwerp had 169 bakers and 78 butchers, but over 300 masters were said to be busy in painting and the graphic arts.

It is due (at least in part) to the role that the arts played in day-to-day life that we find everyday life to be the source of many of the themes of the Dutch masters. Of all the masters, none can surpass Vermeer in transforming the subject of ordinary life into the substance of great art. His subjects are revealed by the titles of his paintings: A Lady Reading a Letter, A Street in Delft, The Maid-Servant, Young Woman with a Water-Jug, Head of A Girl, A Young Lady in Blue, and The Lace-Maker. Each picture shows persons caught in the most evanescent and "human" of moments, moments made permanent and timeless.

What particular prints or slides are viewed is a matter for the judgment of the instructor. There is much to be said, however, for presenting the following short unit on Vermeer. Besides getting at an important social function of painting--the celebration and memorializing of things of ordinary life--the unit will introduce the student to a master of Western Art.

A.B. De Vries's Jan Vermeer Van Delft (London and New York: B.T. Batsford, 1948) and Lawrence Gowing's Vermeer (London: Faber and Faber, 1952) both contain excellent formal analyses of Vermeer's paintings. (Should the instructor wish to incorporate formal considerations into the class discussion, informative commentaries can be found in these studies.) These books contain commentaries on the Vermeer works listed above that a teacher whose specialty is not art history will find instructive.

Suggestions for Additonal Prints or Slides

If the instructor wishes to provide a broader treatment of the

Dutch genre painters, prints may be selected from the following list:

Cornelis Bisschop: *Woman Peeling Apples*. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
Gerard ter Borch: *Girl Reading a Letter to a Woman*. London, Buckingham Palace.
------: *Woman Peeling an Apple*. Vienna, Kunsthistoriches Museum.
Pieter van den Bosch: *Cook Cleaning Utensils*. Berlin, Staatliche Museen.
Esaias Boursse: *Woman Peeling Turnips and May by the Fireside*. Munich, Private collection.
------: *Woman at Her Spinning-Wheel*. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
Quirin Gerritsz (van Brekelenkam): *A Tailor's Workshop*. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
Hendrik van der Burch: *A Woman Mending*. Lugano, Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bernemisza.
Gerard Dou: *Woman Selling Grapes*. London, Buckingham Palace.
Pieter de Hooch: *Courtyard of a House in Delft*. London, National Gallery.
------: *A Woman Weighing Gold*. Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum.
Dirk Jan van der Laen: *White Horse at the Tavern Door*. Aix-la-Chapelle, Suermondt-Museum
Nicolaes Maes: *A Young Girl Sewing.* Collection of Lord Ellesmere.
------: *Girl Threading her Needle*. Mertoun House, Berwickshire, Duke of Sutherland.
Gabriel Metsu: *The Letter*. London, Collection of Lady Otto Beit.
Caspar Netscher: *The Lace-Maker*. London, Wallace Collection
Rembrandt van Rijn: *A Young Girl Leaning on a Window-Sill*
Pieter Gerritsz (van Roestraeten): *Woman Frying Pancakes*. The Hague, Bredius Museum
Godfried Schalcken: *Girl Reading a Letter*. Dresden, Gallery.
------: *An Old Woman Scouring a Pot*. London, National Gallery.
Pieter van Slingeland: *Lacemaker and Woman Selling Poultry*. Dresden, Gallery.
Jan Tilius: *Woman Sewing*. Dresden, Gallery.
Constantyn Verhout: *Student Asleep*. Stockhom, National Museum.

The titles of these paintings alone indicate what is meant by an art work as an image of celebration.

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Session(s)

The Celebration of Nature

Even those most resolutely bent on being alienated, that is, those who cannot find a single thing to celebrate in their daily lives, will acknowledge the worthiness of natural beauty. They protest the violence done to nature by the bulldozer, the housing developer, and the industrial plant. Each age has its own form of Nature worship. For some, the forces of nature inspire terror and awe. For still others, there is a force that runs through nature that will keep men good and noble if each are in communion with it. Wordsworth's narrative poem "Michael" shows this attitude. A son leaves his father's sheepfold and a pastoral setting, close to nature, where he grew up. Alone in the grime and noise of the city he is subjected to the temptations and the meannesses that debase the spirit. In short, he is corrupted.

As Joseph Wood Krutch reminds us, no matter how far up the evolutionary ladder a man may climb, he remains part of the natural world and retains a yearning for his original home. Secondly, because the human species has been involved in a constant struggle against nature and has often been threatened with destruction at her hands, man's feelings toward nature have always been ambivalent. That we have now acquired the capability of destroying nature altogether should temper our feelings. (A careful reading of the Krutch essay will acquaint students with these problems.)

As soon as people began living in cities they began to yearn for pastoral paradise--an Arcadia, in other words. Trouble can begin when a romanticized nature is recommended as a guide for morality and a guide to action: "Follow nature's ways and you won't go wrong." "Let nature take its course," etc.

Fortunately, most people who extol "nature's wisdom" are not really serious. But there are some who dogmatize on the basis of a "natural" way. We must "return to nature," they say, or rather, return nature to her original sovereignty or be damned. Today, unfortunately, there are "nature lovers" who are people haters. These are the "drop-outs" who would have us atone for past ravages upon nature by adopting a life style "in harmony with nature"--self-righteously settling on the land, practicing organic farming or, better still, hunting and gathering, since this leaves nature undisturbed.

Needless to say, this life style, which attracted wide newspaper and media coverage during the turbulent '60s, would only condemn most of mankind to starvation. Views like these are extreme, to be sure, but they are reminders that continued heedless exploitation of nature would seal mankind's doom just as surely.

The works that can be selected to show what man finds in nature are so varied and many as to defy listing. Poetry is, perhaps, the best place to turn. Once again, it might be wise to start with a film that combines poetry, music, and images of nature.

Autumn: Frost Country

Two poems by Robert Frost, autumn scenes of New England, and the music of Erik Satie ("The Three Gymnopedies") are combined to create a brief moment of great beauty. The film opens with the recorded voice of the poet reading "The Road Not Taken," and closes with "reluctance," as the seasonal change is completed and the landscape changes to winter. A 1969 production. Color. 11 minutes.

The teacher might very well have the class read a group of poems on autumn, both old and new, to show how the cycling of the seasons hav inspired in men a love of natural beauty and prompted reflections on men's mortality and the meaning of life. This would be an appropriate time to discuss how the aspects of changing nature become symbols of man's fate. Any anthology contains poems about autumn. A close reading of Shakespeare's Sonnet 73 (That Time of Year...) would help show how men--and lovers--can liken aspects of nature to stages in the unfolding of their own lives.

Some teachers may want to have their classes look at paintings, especially landscapes. Here is a list representative of most types of interest in nature:

1. Jan Botl and Nicolaes Knupfer, Mercury and Argus, 1650. Munich, Bäyerische Gemaldesammlung, A venerable tradition is exemplified here, that of the Arcadian idyll, with mythological scene, often used as the pretext for a nostalgic setting.

2. Nicolas Poussin, The Funeral of Phocion, c. 1648. Paris Louvre. This work seems superficially similar in spirit and subject matter to the one preceding. Nature is depicted here as orderly, rational, comprehensible.

3. View of Garden, c. 20 B.C., wall painting from Villa of Livia at Prima Porta. National Museum, Rome. The only interest here seems to be to show natural elements tamed and attractively arranged for man's pleasure.

4. Aert Van Der Neer, Skating Scene, 1645. Washington, Corcoran Gallery of Art, W.A. Clark Collection. The theme here is nature as man's playground, offering opportunities for exercise and outdoors enjoyment.

5. Winslow Homer, Snap the Whip, 1872. The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, This is one of inrumerable works prompted by nostalgia for childhood. Nature becomes the backdrop to happy childhood activities.

6. Pol de Limbourg, July page (fol.7v) of the Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry, c. 1409-15. Illumination. Chantilly, France, Musee Corde. This very small work (a manuscript page) is typical of yet another way to celebrate nature; as the boutiful provider, orderly, serving man's needs.

7. Simon De Vlieger, The Wreckers. Cambridge, Mass., Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University. The other side of nature, its destructiveness, has of course also found artistic expression.

8. Jacob Van Ruisdael, Waterfall Near a Village. London National Gallery, Landscape painters became strongly attracted to what was for a while called "the sublime" in nature, that is, its awesome powers and untamed aspects.

9. A.Bierstadt, Storm in the Mountains. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. Fierceness of nature was, of course, often exaggerated for greater artistic effect.

10.Gustave Courbet, The Source of the Loue, c. 1864. Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. This work is concerned to render the texture and "feel" of natural objects such as the rock.

11. Paul Cezanne, Mont Sainte-Victoire, 1885-87. The Courtauld Institute, London. The form and structure of things rather than fidelity to optical appearance are important here.

12. Turner, Waves Breaking on a Lee Shore. Tate Gallery, London. This painting was among the first to render finely observed appearances, the fleeting effects of light and color. This became later on the chief concern of the Impressionist school, as exemplified by

11. Claude Monet, Bordighera Trees, 1884. The Art Institute of Chicago (Potter Palmer Collection).

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Session(s)

The Celebration of Civic Humanism

This part of the unit might begin with a class viewing of the following film or a suggestion that students view it out of class.

Spirit of the Renaissance

This companion film to The Medieval Mind presents vividly the influence of major thinkers such as Petrarch, Leonardo da Vinci, and the representative of the countercurrent, Savonarola. Shows how these influences were reflected in the arts and in literature. A 1970 production. Color. 31 minutes.

The civic ideal is exhibited in an astounding number of paintings, works of sculpture, and architecture commissioned for the city of Florence and executed by artists who obviously shared the general outlook and civic pride of their patrons--artists who, in other words, were anything but alienated from society. The high degree to which the civic ideal was actualized made Florence the cultural leader of the world for over a century. This preeminence is attributable to a variety of influences, among them, the rise of scholarship in the humanities and an orientation toward this world rather than to a future world.

There was also a sound material base, because, as the commonly held view has it, "money is the root of all evil - and civilization." Equally important were certain convictions as to how this accumulation of private wealth was to be used, namely, for the maintenance, improvement and embellishment of the city. Public-mindedness was one of the measures of personal worth. Cosimo de' Medici, for example, spent almost twice as much on public works and private charities as he left to his heirs. Indeed, no other family has ever equalled the Medici in their cultural patronage.

Suggestions for Discussion

1. Are there any modern equivalents of the Medici?

2. The Florentines were much concerned with plans for "ideal cities," designed for beauty as well as function. Have there been recent parallels and what has become of them?

3. What is the role of the various private foundations (Ford, Carnegie, Rockefeller, Mellon, etc.) in contemporary cultural life?

4. We now have a National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities. Do you think the Federal Government should support on a large scale (and thereby inevitably influence) the cultural life

of the nation?

5. Do you think citizens should participate in cultural life involuntarily and indirectly, i.e., through taxation? Or communities?

A second focal point for discussion might be the kind of person called a "Renaissance Man" even today. The archetype is, of course, Leonardo da Vinci: painter, sculptor, engineer, designer of weapons and fortifications, inventor, empiricist, explorer of anatomy. (Students should be urged to view the series Leonardo da Vinci whenever it is shown on television).

Then there was Lorenzo de' Medici, called The Magnificent:

> Nothing could better illustrate the morals and manners, the complexity and diversity of the Italian Renaissance than the picture of its most central character ruling a state, managing a fortune, jousting in tournament, writing excellent poetry, supporting artists and authors with discriminating patronage, mingling at ease with scholars and philosophers, peasants and buffoons, marching in pageants, singing bawdy songs, composing tender hymns, playing with mistresses, begetting a pope, and honored throughout Europe as the greatesttand noblest Italian of his time.[1]

Suggestions for Discussion

1. There has been much talk in recent years about the need for each individual to "realize all his human potentialities." The Florentines were acting on such a principle. Are we?

2. The achievement of a broadly based humanistic education, i.e., competence and knowledge in many fields, is always its own reward. In Renaissance Italy it was also rewarded by fame and admiration. Are we as ready to admire the versatile, well-rounded personality? What sorts of people do we actually celebrate--generalists or specialists?

3. Do you think that with the enormous increase in knowledge today it is still reasonable for the individual to aspire to the Renaissance ideal?

4. There has been a tendency in the popular media--film and television--to "celebrate," if that is the word, not the hero, but the anti-hero; not the accomplished individual, but the rascal, the seducer of women, and the genial bungler; not the person of excellence,

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[1] Will Durant, The Renaissance (New York: Simon & Schuste., 1953). p. 119.

but the "common man." (This is not really new, but is an old literary tradition that blossomed in the "picaresque novel" of the 17th and 18th centuries in which the adventures of a rogue were recorded.)

5. The excellence of artistic production in Florence owed much to fierce competition between giant talents. Today we discount competition ("it puts people down"). Can we hope for a great flourishing of cultural achievement?

Students should perhaps be reminded that the Renaissance ideal of personality influenced the earlier American experience. Men like Franklin and Jefferson were scholars, linguists, philosophers, and men of affairs. Even the American Frontier had its homely version of the well-rounded man: the "jack-of-all-trades" or today's "Mr. Fix-it," the kind of person who could cope with almost any problem in the interest of survival. A good question to raise for students is whether the more exalted model of well-roundedness or the humbler domestic versions are still attractive personality models today and whether they receive sufficient acknowledgement in the arts.

Suggested Alternate Approach

The Nostalgic Image

Nostalgia, the sentimental reconstruction of the past, has become a major industry in recent years. Some examples-- e.g., Clarence Day's Life With Father, I Remember Mama, Fiddler on the Roof--have become minor or folk classics. Dozens of packages of recorded music from the past are loudly offered for sale in late evening television commercials. TV series that celebrate the past--such as The Waltons for example--attract large audiences. The 1920's, the 30's, the 40's, the 50's, form the setting of popular films (The Great Gatsby, Stavisky, The Sting, etc.). Radio stations now play the "classic" radio series of the pre-World War II and World War II days. There is even a

Nostalgia Book Club.

Notwithstanding the dubious merit and the commercial motivation of much of the above, nostalgia does provide the substance for some first-rate works of art. Among the art films, for example, we find such works as Bergman's Wild Strawberries, the final scene of which (where the old man dreams his parents are fishing at the lake) is emblematic of the nostabgic image. Other notable recent films, like American Graffiti and Fellini's Amarcord, are unabashedly nostalgic in substance.

One part of this unit could be devoted to nostalgia in both the popular and serious arts. While primarily literary in its focus, the discussion might easily be extended tnto other media at the discretion of the instructor.

While there is certainly some truth in the prevalent view that the current interest in nostalgia is a form of escapism, it is equally true that nostalgia continues to provide us with some of our most powerful images of hope. The feeling we have at the end of Wild Strawberries is clearly one of affirmation and hope.

An interesting focus for the class discussion would be consideration of the question, "What guides the artist (or us) in fashioning a nostalgic image?" The instructor might find the following possibility intriguing, *viz.*, that our nostalgic images are the products of our best yearnings, values and aspirations--in short, an expression of what Matthew Arnold called our "best selves." If that is the case, the nostalgic image may well guide us in the present and the future by reference to what *should* have been in the past.

There are brief readings suitable for discussion. James Agee's widely anthologized "Knoxville: 1915," the preface of his posthumous novel A Death in the Family, is a haunting calling up of the past. Dylan Thomas's "A Child's Christmas in Wales" contains the kinds of images of celebration this unit is designed to center about. James Thurber's hilarious tale of a "typical" night when he was growing up in Columbus, Ohio: "The Night the Bed Fell," from My Life and Hard Times, chronicles the kind of event that becomes a treasured family memory.

Audio-Visual Suggestions

There is an evocative setting of Agee's "Knoxville: 1915" for solo voice and orchestra by Samuel Barber available in several recordings.

For the past several years a dramatic version of Dylan Thomas's "A Child's Christmas in Wales" has been broadcast during the Christmas season on network television. This superb production, performed by the National Theater of the Deaf and narrated by Sir Ralph Richardson, should be highly recommended to the students.

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D. Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Kenneth Clark, Landscape in Art (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961).

Discusses such topics as the landscape of symbols, fact, and fantasy. Excellent supplementary material for the second hour of the unit.

2. Albert E. Elsen, *Purposes of Art*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, N. D.).

Several chapters in this volume are relevant to this unit, e.g., "Themes from Nature," "To Be of One's Time," "The Table in Baroque Art."

3. E. H. Gombrich, *Norm and Form* (London: Phaidon, 1966).

Relevant chapters on the Renaissance are "Renaissance and Golden Age," and "The Early Medici as Patrons of Art."

4. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transmutations, Its Prospects* (New York, 1961).

A classic study.

5. Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Phaidon Press, 1966).

Good complementary reading for the first part of the unit.

6. Morton and Lucia White, *The Intellectual Versus the City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press and the M.I.T. Press, 1962).

A study which highlights a strong tradition in American intellectual thought against celebrating urban life.

* * *

E. *Additional Film Suggestions*

1. *Landscape in Painting*
Color 26 min.

2. *Nature as Impression*
Color 11 min.

3. *Nature as Reality*
Color 11 min.

4. *John Marin*
Color 27 min.

5. *The Acropolis*
Color 11 min.

6. *Brasilia*
Color 13 min.

7. Monument to the Dream
   Color 28 min.

8. The Chicago Picasso
   Color 50 min.

9. Big City - 1980
   54 min.

10. Recognition of Man: The Renaissance
    Color 17 min.

11. Gauguin in Tahiti: The Search for Paradise
    Color 54 min.

XI. DEVELOPING HISTORICAL AWARENESS

> The understanding which we want is an understanding of an insistent present. The only use of a knowledge of the past is to equip us for the present.... The present contains all that there is.
>
> A.N. Whitehead

> History is the memory of human group experience. If it is forgotten or ignored, we cease in that measure to be human. Without history we have no knowledge of who we are or how we came to be, like victims of collective amnesia groping in the dark for our identity.
>
> Robert V. Daniels

> The ideal of an imaginative reconstruction of the past which is scientific in its determinations and artistic in its formulation is the ideal to which the greatest of historians have ever aspired.
>
> Morris R. Cohen

> ...myths stick together to form a mythology, a large interconnected body of narrative that covers all the religions and historical revelation that its society is concerned with, or concerned about. ...as part of this sticking together process, myths take root in a specific culture, and it is one of their functions to tell that culture what it is and how it came to be, in their own mythical terms.
>
> Northrop Frye

XI. DEVELOPING HISTORICAL AWARENESS

Overview

Historical study is concerned with men and their institutions -- the rise and fall of their fortunes, their persistence and alteration. It deals with things in the dimension of time, asking how they came to be what they are and how their existence and nature influenced later events and states of affairs. But every individual person is a person at least in part because of his or her role in various institutions -- as a member of a family, citizen of a state and participant in numerous group activities that express particular interest, talents, needs, ambitions, responsibilities, and traits of personality. Thus the better we understand the institutions that have helped to shape our lives, the better we understand ourselves as individual persons. So the study of history leads to understanding of self; it is the purpose of this unit to help students realize this truth.

Objectives

1. To recognize the writing of history as an art.
2. To gain a notion of the nature and methods of historical inquiry.

Suggested Assignments

Session(s)

1. Read "What is an Historical Event?" (see below) and be prepared to discuss it in class (to be distributed during previous class session.)

2. In the fifth century B.C. a war broke out in Greece between Athens and its allies and a number of Peloponnesian cities led by Sparta. A Greek historian named Thucydides wrote the history of this war, now one of the classics of historical writing and known to posterity as *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. At the end of his first chapter, Thucydides describes his method as a writer of history:

> With reference to the speeches in this history, some were delivered before the war began, others while it was going on; some I heard myself, others I got from

> various quarters; it was in all cases difficult to carry them word for word in one's memory, so my habit has been to make the speakers say what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what they really said. And with reference to the narrative of events, far from permitting myself to derive it from the first source that came to hand, I did not even trust my own impressions, but it rests partly on what I saw myself, partly on what others saw for me, the accuracy of the report being always tried by the most severe and detailed tests possible. My conclusions have cost me some labor from the want of coincidence between accounts of the same occurrences by different eye-witnesses, arising sometimes from imperfect memory, sometimes from undue partiality for one side or the other. The absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things it must resemble if it does not reflect it, I shall be content. (Modern Library edition)

This passage might be duplicated and given to students for their comments. They might also be asked to read an interpretative account of an event or personality in Time or Newsweek in the light of what Thucydides says about method in the writing of history.

Session(s)

Suggested Reading: Alex Haley, "My Furthest-back Person -- The African," New York Times Magazine July 16, 1972

> It all started on long summer evenings when Alex Haley was growing up in Henning, Tenn. After dinner, his grandmother would gather the kids out on the porch and tell them stories about "the African," whose name was "Kintay" and who was kidnaped while out cutting wood and sold into slavery. His ship landed at "Naplis," and he was befriended by a man who played a fiddle, which the African called a "ko." The stories about the African and his descendants continued every night until the 9:15 Panama Limited thundered through Henning, signaling bedtime.
>
> Over the years, the narratives about the African and the six generations that followed him became an indelible

part of Alex Haley's memory. He often thought about them at night as a 17-year old cook on a Coast Guard ship during World War II, which became a 20-year military career.

Now 55, Haley has spent the last 12 years following those slim clues from his grandmother's tales, tracing his family history back to Africa. One day in Gambia, he sat and listened, through an interpreter, to the stories of the chief griot (oral historian) of the Mandinka tribe. They already had spanned centuries, when the griot told the tale of Kunta (whose full name was Kunta Kinte), the eldest of Chief Omoro's four sons, who went out to chop wood one night and was never seen again.

Alex Haley had found his roots.

The search had taken him through the National Archives in Washington, the library of the Daughters of the American Revolution, ancient shipping records at Lloyds of London, and a half-million miles. "Roots," the story of his family from Kunta Kinte to the present, will be published by Doubleday in October (1976). The first printing will be an astounding 250,000 copies, and David Wolper is filming a 13-hour serialization of the book which will be telecast on ABC next January.

Interest in Haley's project has been ballooning ever since the story of his great-great-great-great-grandfather was serialized in the Reader's Digest in 1974.

"This is a saga of black people, which simply has never been told before," Haley said. "The thing is when you deal with history, it's always written by the winners, from the point of view of the haves telling the story of the have-nots. The ancestors of the great majority of people in Chicago are people who are lumped under the great pernicious words 'serfs and peasants' in the history books. Instead, you read about monarchies, duchies, and so forth. In the case of blacks, there just simply hasn't been anything like a valid history of the family culture, love, and compassion. History talked about the slaves amorphously, as a body of people who endured this and that."

Through voluminous and unusual research, Haley has put himself in the place of his four times great-grandfather and told his tory with such stunning emotional detail that it's hard to believe Haley never met his forebear. To get the feeling of what crossing the ocean chained to a plank in the hold for almost 70 days was like, Haley flew to Africa and arranged to spend 10 nights in the third hold of an African freighter, lying in his underwear on a wooden plank, duplicating enough of the experience to convey the pain and terror to readers.

"Many times I cried at the typewriter as I wrote, and I felt good about that. But in that section, I just couldn't get that quality. If I cried, I could make you cry; but I gotta cry first. And I couldn't get that quality writing in a high-rise apartment, so I called my agent and flew to Africa and got on the first ship I could. That third hold was deep, dark, and cavernous; and every night after dinner, I'd go down there and think about Kunta-what he thought, how he felt. And then I came back and was able to write what you read."

Haley estimates that there were "at least 20" times during the search that he almost gave up or lost the trail. One day, out of curiosity, he spent several hours in the National Archives poring over microfilmed, Civil War-era census records for the county in North Carolina where one of his ancestors supposedly lived.

He gave up in boredom, but as he was walking out, he passed through the genealogical section. "In most libraries, you see people lolling around, getting comfortable as they read. But this room caught my eye, because every single person was bent forward over the table. The stuff they were looking at was old and yellowed, and they were using enlarging glasses. It suddenly dawned on me that these people were trying to find out who they are, and for some reason, that made me go back. Four rolls of film later, I was looking down the names, and there it was -- Tom Murray, blacksmith. There, finally, on microfilm, official United States records, was the name I'd heard hundreds of times from my grandmother."

What if's abound in Haley's fascinating search. What if Kunta had given up after slave hunters cut off his foot on his fourth escape attempt, and simply had accepted a new culture? What if his daughter Kizzy and Kizzy's son (Chicken George, the game-cock fighter), and George's son Tom the blacksmith, and Tom's youngest daughter Cynthia (Haley's grandmother) had not passed on the African's stories to subsequent generations? What if Haley had stopped after 500 or 1,000 shipping records before he found the records of the Lord Ligonier, the ship that brought Kunta in its hold to Annapolis, Md.? What if Haley had not spent eight years aboard ship, training himself to be a writer? What if, having narrowed the search to Gambia, Kunta had not been a chief's son?

And the biggest what if of all: What if Kunta had not gone out from the village of Juffure for wood that night?

"I almost am startled now to think of that as being my family as such," Haley said. "There is a great sense of fulfillment to have been able to put together this saga of black people. We, more than any other group of people, have a greater common denominator of background. Each one of us goes back to one of those villages, where someone was captured somehow and brought on a slave ship across that same ocean to the same succession of plantations, through the Civil War and emancipation, to the struggle to this day for freedom. If you can tell the story of any black person, you can tell the story of all.

"We are people who have suffered psychically from deep lack of sense of self and identity."

Before he embarked on his epic search, Haley was a successful freelance writer, who spent three years doing the Playboy magazine interviews. One of his subjects was Malcolm X, who hired Haley to help him write "The Autobiography of Malcolm X." Haley also did the famous interview with George Lincoln Rockwell, then head of the American Nazi Party. "God knows, I didn't agree with him, but he was a very exhilarating subject to interview," he recalled.

Haley's next book will be "My Search for Roots," a detailed diary of his 12-year effort to trace his family history.

Once he got through his mother's family, Haley decided out of curiosity to try his father's side. He learned a family secret-that his blond, blue-eyed grandmother was the daughter of her master, a Col. Jackson. Haley started tracing Jackson in the records. "Here I was with a blood great-grandfather, and I felt nothing. It's the way we're raised that we can't feel blood kinship with somebody of another race." Soon Haley had traced that family back to 1799, when his great-great-grandfather had emigrated from Ireland's County Monahan. "That rocked the hell out of me. I couldn't feel Irish to save my soul."

Still, he hopped a plane and continued the search. "I anticipated a racial problem, but the people in the libraries couldn't have cared less. It was almost as if they didn't see color." Back he went into the records, until he had to visit a church in southern Ireland, where he met the one unmovable barrier in his 12 years of research. "Two priests were in charge of the records, and at one point, they absolutely froze. What I finally realized was that they had discovered I was a Protestant and I was out. It was the biggest rejection I had in my research," Haley said, laughing. "It was like being kicked for the wrong thing."

It would be hard to find the high emotional point of Haley's story. Forced to choose, he would call it the day he heard the griot tell the story of Kunta. "When I came back from Africa, I called my brother George (assistant director of the United States Information Agency), and he told me my cousin Georgia had died in a Kansas City hospital."

Cousin Georgia had been one of the "old ladies" who used to sit on the porch with his grandmother in Henning and spin the tales of the African, and she was the last surviving member of that generation who could answer Haley's questions as he began his search.

"Interested as I am in records, I had the hospital reports and was researching the time of her death. Literally within the hour when I had set foot in that African village, she died. Her job as the last survivor was to shepherd me to that village, and then she went to join the rest.

"Everybody in America goes back to a time and place when there was no writing, and that's the genesis of oral history. This is a human story, and when I saw the subtitle Doubleday chose, I was very moved: 'The saga of an American family.'"

Alex Haley, part Cherokee, part Irish, part African, will note his nation's Bicentennial along with the rest of us on July 4, but emotionally he celebrated it on Sept. 29, 1967. That day he stood on a pier at Annapolis, Md., and thought of the day exactly 200 years before when a ship sailed into the harbor. In its hold were 92 Africans, the survivors of an initial cargo of 140, each branded on the back with an "LL." One of them was a 16-year-old son of a chief, who had thought he was being sold to cannibals, who had endured some of the worst pain and terror one set of human beings could inflict on another. Right there the chief's son had vowed never to give up, and that strong will had made it possible for his four-times great-grandson to stand on that pier two centuries later and weep for a very special man, who had helped turn the abstract suffering of millions into a symbolic American family's story.

(Reprinted, courtesy of the Chicago Tribune, June 14, 1976)

Mr. Haley described his search for his roots in a New York Times magazine article entitled "My Furthest-Back Person - The

African" (July 16, 1972). Perhaps the teacher can arrange to have the article placed on reserve in the library so that students can read it. The story of Haley's quest demonstrates unforgettably how a sense of history helps us find identity and selfhood.

Ask your parents and older relatives about your grandparents and great-grandparents (when they were born, where they lived, what children they had, whom the children married, etc.) and write a brief account of your ancestors, going back as many generations as you can. What choices made by some of your ancestors (for example, in job or career, in place to live) do you think had an especially important effect on your own life?

Session(s)

Assign an account of an episode in American history for discussion in class. Does this account cast light on (1) the path by which your present world came to be what it is and (2) your own place in the world today?

The passage assigned should deal with a particular episode whose details are not well known. Here are some suggestions. (An instructor, of course, may want to choose his own examples.)

Howard Zinn, "The Ludlow Massacre," in The Politics of History, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

J.F.C. Fuller, "The Surprise at Trenton and the Battle of Princeton, 1776-1777," in Decisive Battles of the U.S.A., (New York: Harpers, 1942), ch. 2.

Robert V. Remini, "Election of 1828," in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., ed., The Coming to Power: Critical Presidential Elections in American History, (New York: Chelsea House, 1971).

Sheldon Wolin and John Schaar, "The Battle of Berkeley," The New York Review of Books, 1969; reprinted in Norman S. Cohen, ed., Civil Strife in America, (Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press, 1972), pp. 210-22.

Edwin P. Hoyt, The Palmer Raids, 1919-1920: An Attempt to Suppress Dissent, (New York: Seabury Press, 1969).

Frederick Lewis Allen, "Harding and the Scandals," Only Yesterday, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), ch. 6.

Lt. Col. Joseph B. Mitchell, "The Battle of Bunker Hill," Decisive Battles of the American Revolution, (New York: Putman, 1962), ch. 3.

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A. Introduction

In studying history, we cast our eye over the actions and passions, the doings and sufferings of fellow human beings who lived a long time ago and a long way off. We learn of institutions--political parties, religions, entire empires--that ceased to exist centuries before we were born. All this may be interesting to us on its own account. Yet the ultimate value of this study lies in its bearing upon the lives we lead here and now, in the perspectives it affords on the institutions of our own time, and most of all in the insight it gives us into ourselves, our strengths and limitations, our ideals and our chances of realizing them.

The aim of this unit is to help a student see how the study of history leads to self-understanding. The unit moves from general considerations about the nature of historical study to a particular example of increased self-understanding achieved through genealogical inquiry, and finally to the examination and analysis of an episode in American history that was significant in the development of a present-day social institution that has profoundly influenced the lives of many living persons.

All students who take this unit will no doubt already have studied some history, at least parts of American history. But probably few will have had the opportunity to think very much about the nature of history as such or the importance of historical study. Therefore, the opening part of the unit will be taken up with the discussion of an introduction to the nature of history, "What is an Historical Event?" which is presented below and which should be duplicated and distributed before this unit is started. In their reading, and in the class discussion of it, the students should be encouraged to reflect on such general questions as: What is the historical point of view? What makes an event historical? What is historical significance? What are the values of studying history? The suggested readings listed below might be made available to students who wish to pursue these questions further.

In another session, the students may discuss the account by Alex Haley of his persistent and ultimately successful effort to confirm the actual existence of a remote ancestor who seemed at first only legendary. Questions and suggestions for this discussion are proposed below. Students should also be encouraged to investigate their own genealogy, at least a few generations back, to see how their lives were molded by the actions of their own ancestors.

In a final session, a specific historical episode can be discussed. The purpose of this study is to show how once we understand what actually happened and why it happened, we also understand how important social institutions were evolved, or reshaped, or destroyed--and thus how the world in which we now live, and the ways it impinges on our individual growth and development came to be what they are. Each of us must ask from time to time:

Who am I? What is special and important about me? What do I have in me to become? To answer such questions we need to know something about our past, the forces that have shaped our lives and personalities. An important part of the answer is attained in the study of history.

B. What is an Historical Event? (For distribution to students)

The word "history" has a well-known double meaning, which should be acknowledged at once and guarded against. When we day a land such as Cyprus or Vietnam has had a long and often tragic history, we are speaking of events that happened there. This is what the historian studies. When we say that someone's library contains a great deal of history, we are speaking of the written works which are the product of the historian's activity. History in the second sense is *about* history in the first sense.

So it is best to have two words, in order to avoid ambiguity. The events themselves -- what happened at Gettysburg or Appomattox -- let us call "historical events" or "the historical process." What is written about them -- say, Bruce Catton's *Centennial History of the Civil War* -- we can call "historical studies" or, for short, simply "history."

The Historical Point of View. The historian studies the historical process, or some segment of it that he is particularly interested in; his purpose is to understand it and to share that understanding with others by writing history. But what is the distinctive character of this understanding? What makes historical study different from other kinds of study?

First, of course, the historian is interested in the past, not what may or may not happen in the future, but what actually has happened. Second, he is interested in human beings, in what they have done and made, their actions (and their sufferings) and their works. He may write of storms and earthquakes, but only if they impinge on the lives, individual and collective, of persons. Third, he is interested in actions and objects, not in all their manifold aspects, but as they are related in their order of time and in their order of unfolding, as one grows out of or is shaped by the influence of another. To take the historical point of view toward anything, then, is to consider it in its temporal dimension and as part of a process.

The historical point of view is of course not the only way of looking at things. Consider two paintings, one by Piero della Francesca and one by Picasso. We can, if we wish, compare them without considering when or where they were painted; we may not even know who painted them. We can compare their compositions, their color-schemes, their subject-matters. The comparison may be more or less illuminating. Such a critical approach is timeless. The art historian, on the other hand, is interested in the way the two paintings fit into the whole history of Western art. To him it is of the first importance that they were painted nearly five hundred years apart, in very different societies and cultural conditions. He especially wants to know whether the older painting influenced the newer indirectly or directly. Can the character of Picasso's painting be at least in part explained by what Piero had done? This is the historical point of view.

We can take the historical point of view toward anything that can be seen in temporal relationships with other things -- towards our technology, our scientific theories, our political and economic institutions. Even those matters that sometimes seem to us most fixed and changeless were not always what they are here and now. Our elaborate technology grew step by step out of earlier phases in the gradual development of tools for enlarging the capacities of human hands and machines for transforming energy and making it more accessible. Earlier societies had different scientific theories from ours. Our form of government and our system of distributing goods were once new. To regard things historically is to wonder how they came about, and to try explaining them as the outcome of a continuing course of change. By the same token, it is to see them as present phases of a process that may continue on into the future, though the historian does not claim to make predictions or prophecies.

Historical Events. When George Washington acquired his notorious false teeth, this was no doubt a matter of some importance to him. It probably made his day. It was an event, but not an historical event--unless it can be established that the discomfort the crudely made teeth occasioned prompted him to lose patience or give way to irritability and fire a subordinate, make a rash decision, or otherwise do something that had historic consequences. John Osborne, the British playwright has a fine play about Martin Luther, whose break from Rome led to the Reformation. In the play he makes much of Luther's chronic constipation. As Aldous Huxley remarked somewhere, who knows how much of history depends on the indisposition of key figures?

But Washington's dentures belong to his biography, not to American history, strictly speaking. When he accepted, however, the invitation of the Second Continental Congress to take command of the Colonial Army that was in the process of being formed--that was an historical event. Perhaps it goes without saying that the historian is interested, not in all events but in historical events. But what is the difference?

An historical event is an event that is significant for the development of an institution. Very often the institution is a political one, a nation-state. But it need not be. Religious organizations, industrial corporations, art museums, and even bowling leagues have histories. There are even histories of history.

The key words in this definition need some explanation, however brief. Let us consider "institution," "development," and "significance."

Institutions are defined by certain practices which their members engage in: they bowl together on Friday nights, worship in certain ways on Sunday mornings, engage in lending and borrowing and paying interest, etc., on Monday to Friday, 9:00-3:00. A practice (for example, bowling regularly or reciting certain prayers) is a type of action which is repeated and which is governed by rules, however vague. You aren't bowling unless you follow the rules of the game; and you aren't a member in good standing of the Rolling Stones Bowling Club unless you show up regularly to take part in its games with rival clubs. When a group of people join together for the purpose of carrying on a set of connected practices, they become an institution. The institution comes into existence at a particular time. It continues to exist as long as its central purpose is conceived to remain, and may long outlive its original members, if they are continually replaced by others and there is some stability in the way in which the institution functions.

But institutions change, too. Their original practices may be modified--prayers that once were in Latin are now said in English; after several hundred years the language of the King James Bible is replaced by the New Standard Version. They may grow larger, or smaller, stronger or weaker, more active or less active. When an institution passes through a series of changes in the same direction over a period of time, it is said to undergo development. For example, if the club takes on more members gradually over several years, we may describe this as a pattern of development: it grew larger. On the other hand, if a church gradually simplifies its form of worship, relaxes its creed, and democratizes its government, we may say that it has gone through a process of liberalization; this is its pattern of development.

Development can be downhill too: the fall of Rome was a development, and so (on a much smaller scale) was the unraveling of the Watergate conspiracy. A development, however, always has a direction.

These are somewhat abstract notions, but they are quite fundamental to the historical point of view. They enable us to see how some events are historical, though others are not. This is a matter of significance. There are two ways in which an event becomes historically significant; it can either make or mark a difference in the development of an institution.

Consider that development in the social and political role fo women which occurred in the nineteenth century in the United States, reaching its climax in 1920 in the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution which gave women the right to vote. Broadly speaking, we may say that there was a movement during this period toward greater sexual equality. Many things that happened in this period played a role in fostering that development. For example, when Carrie Chapman Catt won election to the presidency of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1915, that organization took on a greatly increased strength and energy under her direction and played an indispensable role in achieving the decision in 1920. These events were causally significant. That is, they made things happen.

So one way in which an event becomes an historical event is by being efficacious in promoting a development of an institution. But some events that are not efficacious are nevertheless significant because they reveal and point up the course of a particular development. Historians must have their eye out for events that show that a development is taking place, or has reached a certain point. For example, the first woman's rights convention in the United States was held at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, at the invitation of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. This was a remarkable affair in itself, with speeches by Lucretia Mott and Frederick Douglass. Perhaps, it did exert some influence, and make future progress in the woman's movement easier. But quite apart from this effect, it was highly significant. The fact that it sould be held at all at that time shows how far feminist leaders had already gone in their own thinking. It was a sign -- a harbinger -- of the demand for equal rights that was to be made with increasing intensity and effectiveness.

History and the Individual. In describing "what happened in history"--that is, in giving an account of those events that were significant in the development of some nation-state or other institution--the historian often speaks of two kinds of action. First, of course, he speaks of the actions of individual persons: President Roosevelt signed the National Recovery Act; General Eisenhower ordered the invasion of Europe on D-day; those who later came to be called the "Catonsville Nine" decided to destroy draft records as a way of protesting the war in Vietnam. The actions become understandable when we know the reasons for which these persons acted -- that is, what they hoped to accomplish by their actions, and why they believed these goals could be attained by the means they employed. But second, the historian speaks of the collective actions of groups, and especially of institutions. He says that the United States declared war on Germany, that General Motors lowered its stock dividends, that Common Cause lobbied for greater accountability among congressmen, that the Environmental Protection Agency was opposed to a weak law against strip-mining.

Now, of course, although these actions could only be performed by institutions, not by individuals, nevertheless the institutions could not have acted unless individuals had also acted. The United States could not have declared war on Germany unless individual senators and representatives voted for this declaration. The actions of General Motors were the result of decisions by the president and members of the board of directors. The activities of Common Cause are decided by its board and by its staff. And although there may be some mystery about the way in which the Environmental Protection Agency makes its decisions, there can be no doubt that in the end they depend on the will of its higher officials.

So when we study history -- that is, the way institutions have developed -- we are also studying what individual persons have done, or tried to do. And as we learn more about their reasons for acting, their motives and goals, and even their fears and obsessions, we cannot help but learn about human nature in general, and about ourselves. You may never be placed in the position where you have to decide, as President Truman had to decide, whether to loose the awful destructiveness of the first two atomic weapons on the people living in Japanese cities. But as you read of this crucial episode in the early days of the so-called Cold War, you must enter into his situation as it appeared to him -- that he wanted to bring about, and what he believed necessary to bring it about. You may end up by deciding that he made the wrong decision -- such judgments are open to all of us, as we study history, and are often (and properly) made by historians. But before you judge, you must participate in the decision sympathetically. If you ask yourself, What would I have done? you not only come to understand better what was in the President's mind -- you discover some important things about yourself.

This is one way in which the study of history becomes a study of oneself: to enter into the decisive actions of historical figures is to become more fully aware of one's own temperament, assumptions, capabilities, and limitations.

There is a second point to be made about the relation between historical study and self-knowledge. Many of the institutions whose developments the historian is concerned with are now long gone: the court of the Egyptian Pharaohs, the Holy Roman Empire, the Federalist Party, Students for a Democratic Society. Yet the more we understand even these dead institutions, the more we discover in them parallels to institutions that we know quite intimately and that affect our lives. But when we study the history of our own country, and the institutions that have played a part in its development -- the Republican Party, the Teamster's Union, Planned Parenthood, the American Medical Association, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Civil Liberties Union, to name just a few -- we are often dealing with institutions that are still alive and vital. To understand how they began, and how they developed into their present form, is to understand better the ways in which they are today influencing the course of our lives.

When the organization not only is one that plays a role in current events, but is one to which you have a special tie, the study of its history can be even more fully and immediately a revelation of yourself. Suppose your father is a member of the Teamster's Union. The story of the struggles through which that union came into existence and came to be so powerful, and the story of the internal problems that have plagued it in recent years, must be of special poignancy to him and you. Suppose you are a member of the American Civil Liberties Union. The story of how it came into existence during the early post-World-War I period of flagrant violations of civil liberties, and grew into a champion of those who have been, in one way or another, deprived of rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights may give you a sense of pride.

For what is it to be a person? It is not just to be a body that eats and sleeps: it is to be a member of a society, and of many institutions within that society -- a family, a business, a club, a team, a church, a neighborhood, an electorate, a city or borough or township, and so on. What you are is partly determined by the institutions to which you belong. And the more you understand those institutions from the historical point of view, the more you understand yourself.

C. Further Suggestions for Teaching

The first aim of this session should be to review briefly --

and make sure the students understand -- the main ideas of "What is an Historical Event?" -- especially the concepts of (1) institution, (2) development, and (3) significance. Further historical examples of these concepts would be helpful. Those students who have brought in their own examples of recent historical events should share them for discussion. Of each example, these questions should be asked:

1. What institution, or institutions, does this event involve?
2. What kind of development (in what respect, in what direction) does the event signify?
3. Did the event enter causally into the development?
4. Does the event reveal the direction of development?

Students might be referred to "Writing 'Hot' History," an article by Max Lerner (Saturday Review, May 29, 1976) on Robert Woodward and Carl Bernstein's book on the end of the Nixon presidency, The Final Days. Lerner suggests five criteria for deciding whether something is journalism or history: 1)tests of evidence must have been applied; 2)an author must allow for his own bias; 3)all the evidence must be available to the author; 4) enough time must have passed to see what consequences follow from what the author is writing about; 5)the writer, if he is an historian, must indicate the lasting significance of the events he describes.

If there is time, students should be encouraged to express their own views, especially if divergent views emerge, about:

1. the special features of historical study (as distinct, say from social sciences),
2. the kinds of understanding and insight that historical explanations and interpretations provide
3. the values of historical study (a) for society as a whole and (b) for the individual.

Further Suggested Projects

1. Students might be asked to read a piece of investigative journalism -- or even Woodward and Bernstein's The Final Days (which is destined to appear in paperback) -- and apply Max Lerner's five criteria or the criteria listed above to determine if a particular account deserves to be labeled history or journalism.

2. Students might be asked to read several views or accounts of the same event or place, impose a pattern on the views -- that is, see what they have in common, on what premises (expressed or unexpressed) they rest, what auctorial biases they conceal -- and interpret the views. This can be a valuable exercise in handling the materials of history. (A handy source for such an exercise is a text like Henry Steele Commager's America in Perspective (published in abridged form as a Mentor Book), a collection of views of Americans and American life by foreign observers.)

3. Students might be asked to review the files of a newspaper for a month or so -- say, the New York Times or a local paper -- January through March of 1935. Once again, they would be dealing with the materials of history so as to arrive at an interpretation of events, fads, tastes in entertainment as reported by a daily newspaper.

4. Assign students a myth or several myths to read. What "truth" is contained in the myth? What does it tell us about the culture that created it?

5. Students might be asked to examine myths from various cultures that explain phenomena or occurrences - e.g., the Creation. What do they tell us about the cultures in which they are set?

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D. Suggestions for Further Reading

1. Robert V. Daniels, Studying History: How and Why (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966) (paperback).

An elementary but thoughtful introduction to the study of history. Chapter 1-3 are particularly helpful.

2. Trygve R. Tholfsen, Historical Thinking: An Introduction (New York: Harper and Row, 1967) (paperback).

A very good explanation of the nature of historical inquiry, and history of major historians and types of historical study. The Introduction is especially illuminating.

3. Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1953) (paperback).

Chapter 10 deals quite deeply with the nature of historical study and its essential role in culture, as well as with a number of specific issues about the relationship of history to toher fields of knowledge. Its theme is that "History as well as poetry is an organon of our self-knowledge, an indispensable instrument for building up our human universe" (p. 260).

4. G.R. Elton, The Practice of History (New York: Crowell, 1967).

Chapter 1 has much of value to say about the autonomy, purpose, and types of historical study. Its thesis is that "history, to be worthy to itself and beyond itself, must concentrate on one thing: the search for truth" (p. 49).

5. Henry Steel Commager, The Nature and The Study of History (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1965); also published as The Study of History, 1966.

A discussion of problems involved in the teaching of history; of special interest to the teacher.

6. A.L. Rowse, The Use of History (London: Hodden and Stoughton, 1946).

A small book that discusses various aspects of history as a discipline and as a form of knowledge.

E. Audio-Visual Suggestions

Films (Visual Aids Service, University of Illinois)

1. World History: An Overview
Color 16 minutes

2. How Man Discovers His Past
Color 20 minutes

3. History: Man's Recorded Past (The Humanities Series)
Color 21 minutes

4. Africa: Historical Heritage
Color 9 minutes

5. The Ancient Africans
Color 23 minutes

6. History of the High People: Omowale -- The Child Returns Home 30 minutes

7. Battle of Yorktown
Color 13 minutes

8. The Rise of Organized Labor
18 minutes

9. The Decision to Drop the Bomb
35 minutes

10. Susan B. Anthony
20 minutes

XII. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: VISUAL ARTS

On the Nude Form in Art History

...modern art shows even more explicitly than the art of the past that the nude does not simply represent the body, but relates it, by analogy, to all structures that have become part of our imaginative experience.... The Greeks perfected the nude in order that men might feel like a god, and in a sense this is still its function, for although we no longer suppose that God is like a beautiful man, we still feel close to divinity in those flashes of self-identification when, through our own bodies, we seem to be aware of a universal order.

Kenneth Clark

XII. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: VISUAL ARTS

Overview

This unit, like others in this section, is designed to cultivate historical consciousness by drawing attention to developments which manifest both continuity and change in the humanistic tradition. Centering on interest in the nude form and its expressive powers, students should recognize the age-old preoccupation with the human figure as a vehicle for expressing attitudes toward the self and as a aesthetic form in itself worthy of contemplation.

Objectives

1. To see the history of art as exhibiting an essential unity in the midst of diversity.

2. To provide further opportunities to practice critical skills acquired in previous units.

3. To see how images of the self and its relations can be embodied in the human figure.

Suggested Assignments

Kenneth Clark, The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form, Anchor Books, Chapter 1, pp. 23-54.

This book was the second of the A. W. Mellon lectures in the Fine Arts, which are delivered annually at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. The final chapter provides a basic orientation to the content of this unit.

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Contents

A. Introduction: The Nude Form in Art History
B. Suggestions for Teaching
C. Reading Suggestions
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A. Introduction: The Nude Form in Art History

The purpose of this unit is to introduce students to several basic traditional art styles in Western history--those which form the basis of the expectations most people bring with them when they look at a work of art. The aim is to show how art styles both grow out of past traditions and are shaped by factors within the living society. Also discussed will be some of the ways in which modern artists have broken away from traditional forms of Western style. Students will be encouraged to speculate as to why these breaks have occurred.

The unit will spend some time on the way the nude human image was developed in Greek society as the highest expression of ideal beauty, how it influenced the course of Western art, and how it fares in modern art. Interest in painting and sculpting the nude form is one of the most enduring humanistic traditions in our history, one which provides a natural link from age to age. (This approach is suggested by Lord Kenneth Clark's The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form, and much of the material in the unit leans heavily on this work.) Since the unit is brief, the historical periods must be condensed. In spite of this, the student should be able to grasp the following notions:

1. Styles in art develop out of older styles, are influenced by them, and change in response to emerging ideals.
2. Art is constantly changing, and must change, in order to express the point of view of artists and society.
3. The formal qualities of art, rather its subject matter, endow it with its expressive quality.

Brief Outline

1. Greek Art
    - a. Development of Greek Naturalism
    - b. The Classical Ideal
2. The Middle Ages
    - a. Rejection of the Classical Tradition
    - b. The Nude in Romanesque Art
    - c. The Nude in Gothic Art
3. Renaissance
    - a. Establishment of the European Tradition
4. Modern Period
    - a. Three Contemporary Trends
    - b. The Art of Picasso, Matisse, and Henry Moore.

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B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session (s)

To set the stage for discussion, the film Figures might be shown. In a few minutes it touches on a number of periods in art history. The following is a description of the film.

Figures

> Views artworks of many cultures and periods to show ways in which artists through the centuries have interpreted the human figure. Illustrates the unique qualities of the figure for artistic expression. Designed to increase the layman's enjoyment of art by enlarging his capacity for seeing. A 1968 production. 14 minutes.

The instructor may next want to set up two slide projectors and two screens, so that slides can be projected simultaneously. Some suggestions as to slides that can be shown and compared are given below.

On the left screen, show Marcel Duchamp's Nude Descending A Staircase. Allow students to express their reactions. On the right screen, project the Aphrodite of Melos. Once again, call for reactions. Next on the left, show Renoir's Nude In The Sunlight (1876). Point out to students that the Nude Descending A Staircase is an attempt to portray--or analyze--a form in motion. Ask for a comparison with the Renoir.

Change the slide on the left to Picasso's Three Dancers (1929), the slide on right to the Esquiline Venus. Then on the left, project Renoir's La Baigneuse Blonde. Bring up the question of realism. Is the Renoir truly realistic? The Venus? Change the right slide to Ivan Albright's Into The World Came A Soul Called Ida. Is this realistic too?

Change the left slide to one of Willem De Kooning's Woman paintings. Ask students to note the aggressive distortions and slashing brushstrokes. What kind of statement is De Kooning making concerning women? Artists within the same age seem to use different means to express different vision. Is it surprising that expression changes from age to age?

All of the works projected have been concerned with the same subject matter captured in three different ages, but the Greek image was the beginning of the tradition to which all three belong. What was distinctive about the experience of the Greeks that brought into being this remarkable art and initiated the tradition of the nude over the last twenty-five hundred years?

Start again with blank screens. On the left side, project the Egyptian Mycerinus And His Queen, c. 2500 B.C. Ask students to concentrate only on the male figure, noting the way he is standing--one foot forward, one foot back, his hands clenched at the sides, head staring rigidly forward. The weight is evenly distributed on both feet. Blocklike and simple though it is, it displays concern with naturalistic detail, especially in the head. But it is not really free-standing, since the stone has not been cut away between the legs, nor even between the two figures. The two figures suggest overwhelming and superhuman might, expressive of the Egyptian attitude toward a god-king.

On the right screen, show an archaic Kouros, c. 600 B.C. Notice how the stance is like that of the Egyptian pair. Yet, how is it different? For one thing, it is somewhat less naturalistic, and more awkward, than the Egyptian work. Transitions from one part of the body to another are less smooth. The head is large, the eyes especially large. Although the artist displays an interest in the anatomy of the figure, the muscles and rib cage are rendered in a stylized, geometric fashion. But, the block has been carved away, and the figure is free standing. The figure appears younger and less regal. The Egyptian sculpture represented a king. This sculpture represents only a youth, an athlete. Finally, this figure is nude, while the Egyptian sculpture is clothed. This sculpture, like statues of countless Kouroi (boys), stands at the beginning of the long tradition of the nude in Western art.

On the left screen, project the Kore (girl or virgin) known as Lady of Auxerre. Again it is blocklike and stiff, and like the Kouros, somewhat more awkward than the Egyptian female figure. (There are very few representations of the female nude in early Greek art; they are almost always draped.) Switch the right screen to the Aphrodite Mirror Handle, early sixth century, which is nude, and strikingly similar to the Kouros in form.

Actually, the nude athlete forms the obsessive core of the remarkable development of form in Greek art. This concentration on the male body reflects the values of a male-oriented society, and to some degree, the influence of religious practices and the tendency to regard love alliances between men as more noble.

The shift in emphasis in Greek art to the nude form of the young athlete reflects the values of a more humane society, concerned with the individual and his development; it suggests the value Greek society placed on the development of a beautiful, athletic body in harmony with a trained mind and a formed moral character -- the ideal of the mens sana in corpore sano. Greek youths trained in the gymnasium in the nude. In games, athletes participated in the nude. It is easy to understand how this image came to represent the Greek ideal of beauty. Change the slide on the left screen to the Palaestra Scene, (early fifth century), a vase painting which depicts an obese young man among slim boys and the distaste of one of his companions.

If the instructor can do so without offending the sensibilities of the class, he or she may want to consider our society's current obsession with the naked - rather than the nude - body, especially female, as manifested by the wide circulation of magazines of the Playboy variety. Such consideration might center around the following questions:

a) What is the difference between the naked and the nude?

b) What does the nude in art tell us about the position of woman in the society or civilization in question?

c) What does the photograph of the naked woman in, say, Playboy magazine tell us about the position of woman in 20th-century American society?

Having encouraged the class to comment on and compare the series of slides, the instructor may want to project a series that will illustrate the development of Greek art--as seen in the nude--from the archaic age up through the Golden Age in the fifth century B.C.

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Session(s)

Suggested Class Activity

Screens and projectors are again helpful in this session. The slides can be presented in various groupings, and images can be retained on the screens for purposes of comparison. Perhaps the teacher should supply only absolutely necessary information, leaving the students to make their own judgments of changes they see in the form.

As the teacher begins to project slides showing works from late antiquity on the left screen, he might talk with the students about the way the Romans, having conquered the Greeks, as the poet Horace said, were conquered by their captives - becoming completely enamoured of Greek art and thought. Roman art became Hellenized, though with a markedly more realistic bent. For that matter, portraiture became a Roman art. Students should view, for example, the Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, 161-180 A.D., Portrait Of A Lady, c. 90 A.D., and Vespasian, c. 75 A.D.

As the official state religion weakened in influence, the "mystery" cults began to flourish, as slides from the Villa of Mysteries, Pompeii, c. 50 B.C., indicate. As long as a hundred years before the official acceptance of Christianity, the nude becomes rare in Roman art. Good slides to view would be Heracles and Stag, fourth century; Crucifixion, Rome, fourth-century; and the frieze from the Arch of Constantine, fourth-century. Adam, a fifth-century ivory panel, is a Hellenized male nude, but he has become squat and unconvincing, surrounded in a schematic way by the animals of the Garden.

The students can now move into the Romanesque period with, say, slides of reliefs of Adam and Eve in The Fall and The Expulsion, Hildesheim, c. 1010. Note the attitudes of the figures and how they are delineated. For purposes of comparison, slides of the Last Judgment, West Tympanum, Cathedral of Autun, and Adam and Eve, Wiligemus, can be shown. The question is, why did the Christian religion reject the pagan ideal of beauty for these forms? (Perhaps a flashback to a Greek Aphrodite might be appropriate.)

Now a series of Gothic slides can be shown. For a long time in the Middle Ages, only the themes of the Garden and Damned were proper to representations of the nude. But in the twelfth century, Church authorities decreed that the Resurrection should be depicted in a manner which leaves no doubt that the spirit of the Gothic age made possible an examination of ancient classical art, which was available (though shunned) in Mediterranean countries throughout the Middle Ages. The teacher might want to show Nereid, first century A.D., and Maitani's Creation of Eve (late Gothic).

Now return to the Nereid. On the right hand screen project Ghiberti's Creation of Eve, which, like Maitani's, is derived from this ancient image. Next, show Massaccio's Expulsion From Paradise; then show Michelangelo's Creation of Adam, the Battle Of the Centaurs, and David, works presenting an idealized view of man.

Certainly the instructor cannot go wrong by dwelling on the towering genius of Michelangelo, whose work helped change the course of art history. A short film is available:

Michelangelo and His Art

Traces the life and career of Michelangelo--sculptor, architect, and poet. Shows and analyzes his original works, including the David, the Pieta, the Moses, the figures of the Medici chapel, and the Deposition. A 1963 production. Color. 15 minutes.

Without comment, one might show a slide of a standing male nude by Leonard Baskin, and on the one screen, a work like Alain Jacquet's Leda: Camouflage, 1963, a reproduction of an antique female nude partly obliterated by a blackish triangle in which is brushed a blackish cow with large udders. Students, of course, should be apprised of the myth of Leda.

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Session(s)

A single projector and screen will suffice to show how the human figure is used in the twentieth century. A good place to begin is with the last slide by Jacquet. It is impertinent, but it sums up the feeling many contemporary artists have toward the classical nude, as even the titles of works like the following indicate: Mel Ramos's The Hippopotamus, Chiquita Banana, and Monterey Jackie; Tom Wesselman's Great American Nude No. 99, Bathtub Collage No. 4, and Mouth No. 12.

The teacher might ask students if the impersonality and derisive quality of these works expresses anything of significance about life today.

Other slides that might be shown include Jack Beal's Madison Nude, 1967; Robert Graham's Untitled, 1970; John de Andrea's Untitled, 1970. (Titles are avoided by the artist to avoid compromise.) Philip Pearlstein's Woman Reclining On Couch, 1966, and Models in The Studio, 1967.

We are too close to the age we live in to be objective about its trends. We do know that the great innovators of the modern movement, though witty and at times mischievous, are fundamentally serious about a need to break away from forms of the past they see as deadening.

At this juncture the teacher may want to show samples of the work of two of the century's most significant innovators: Picasso and Matisse. Good choices would be the former's Demoiselles D'Avignon, The Embrace, Girl Before a Mirror, and the latter's Dancers, The Blue Nude, The Joy of Life.

To demonstrate the turn sculpture has taken in our time, the instructor need only show representative samples of Henry Moore's work. Recommended are Recumbent Figure, Reclining Figure, The Family.

A film is also available to dramatize changes in nineteenth and twentieth-century interpretations of the human figure:

From Renoir to Picasso

Describes the characteristic styles of Renoir, Seurat, and Picasso, and presents examples of painting from all periods to provide a frame of reference for works by the three painters. Paul Haesaerts. Belgium, 1950. Released in the U.S. by Brandon Films, 1955. 32 minutes.

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C. Reading Suggestions

The following are but a few volumes in which the study of the human figure may be continued.

1. Bernard Berenson, The Drawings of the Florentine Painters, Vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

Excellent for its illustrations

2. Edmund Burke Feldman, Varieties of Visual Experience, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., n. d.).

The human figure is examined in the styles of objective accuracy, formal order, emotion, and fantasy.

3. Henry Kraus, The Living Theatre of Medieval Art (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1967).

A story of twelfth and thirteenth century medieval sculpture. Chapter III discusses contrasting images of Eve and Mary.

4. J. J. Pollitt, Art and Experience in Classical Greece (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

Examines some of the basic cultural experiences used in artistic expression and how this was accomplished.

5. Jacob Rosenberg, On Quality in Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

Discusses criteria of excellence in past and present art. Numerous illustrations of the human figure.

6. Raymond V. Schoder, S.J., Masterpieces of Greek Art (Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society,[n. d.])

Excellent for its photographs.

D. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

Many films are available, among which are

Contemporary/McGraw-Hill Films

1. The Rise of Greek Art. Color. 18 minutes.

2. Greece: The Golden Age. 29 minutes.

3. The Titan: Story of Michelangelo. 67 minutes.

4. _Renoir_. Color. 23 minutes.
5. _Picasso_. Color. 50 minutes.
6. Henry Moore. 29 minutes.
7. Reclining Figure (Moore's UNESCO Sculpture). Color. 16 minutes.
8. _Images of Leonard Baskin_. Color. 28 minutes.

Visual Aids Service, University of Illinois

1. _Sculpture: The Forms of Life_. Color. 22 minutes.
2. _Sculpture at the Middelheim_. Color. 11 minutes.
3. _Homage to Rodin_. Color. 17 minutes.
4. _Pierre-Auguste Renoir_. Color. 30 minutes.
5. _Birth of a Bronze_ (with Jacques Lipschitz). Color. 18 minutes.
6. _Henri Matisse_. Color. 16 minutes.
7. _The Chicago Picasso_. Color. 50 minutes.

XIII. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: MUSIC

Overview

The theme of continuity and change in music can be examined in both social and political contexts. Topics selected for study include music and human nature, music and social groupings, and the social force of music.

Objectives

1. To demonstrate that musical forms and expressions reflect the spirit of an age.

2. To investigate the relations between composers, audiences, and musical culture.

3. To see how music relates to the problems of the self.

Assignments

Much of the music of this unit can be played on records or tapes in the classroom. There need be no required reading assignments. A schedule will have to be arranged for musical selections to be listened to outside the class.

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    1. Music and Human Nature
    2. Music, Politics, and Economics
    3. Music and Social Groupings
    4. Functions and Value of Music
    5. Acculturation

A. Introduction

A culture, musical or otherwise, is a means of coping with present existence. Traditions are active, not static; cultural monuments are not relics, but manifest and reinforce values that grow from present needs. Music represents and reinforces language, philosophy, personal and social identification, varieties of life style, and ethical and theological ideals.

Musical culture is one way in which man defines both himself and his relation to the persons and things outside himself. It reflects his conception of his world.

This unit is planned to move students through a variety of questions. The goal is growing awareness of the ranges and varieties of the conceptions of human life as expressed, symbolized, and embodied in music. In earlier units the student examined the elements and forms of music and began to explore the infinite subtleties of expression possible in different musical forms, content, and cultural settings. Now, using the same tools of response and analysis, students can direct their efforts to exploring the interactions of individuals, composers, mass audiences, and cultural traditions. A culture acts on the composer, the individual, and the mass audience. What is expected of the composer or the listener? How much freedom is allowed--artistically, politically, economically? A composer of operas and symphonies, for example, does not own the tools of his craft; someone else owns the recording studios and pays for the performers. Even more important than political and economic control, a culture conditions the way in which music is perceived: as a source of pleasure; as an edifying expression of a human ideal; as an expression of the human condition; as a form of communication; or as socially useful vehicle. A culture can even condition an audience not to listen and attend. In one way or another, music creates part of the human environment.

B. Suggestions for Teaching

Session(s)

Topic: Music and Human Nature

This session stresses that what seems "natural" for one culture is also often natural for others. Some apparent differences are, in reality, differences in the contexts in which human nature is expressing itself.

Students may begin by listening to the first eight measures of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, first movement (about 20 seconds of it). They should be informed that when a composer calls a piece a "concerto," he has committed himself to certain cultural preconceptions. In Bach's day this form was the major vehicle for expression through a large instrumental ensemble.

Back wrote this particular concerto to accompany a job application sent to the Margrave of Brandenburg. Obviously the sample was to demonstrate his ability to write in the accepted style. Bach was not "bucking the system"; he was trying to find a place within it. (The ironic footnote to this is that the Margrave never even opened the package containing the music, and Bach did not get the job. The manuscript was found in the attic of the palace years later.) Regularity is heard in the rhythm and in the repetition of patterns in the eight one-measure ideas. Some instruments have more fluid lines; some are more angularly structured. Ask the students if the music sounds "controlled."

Call attention to the expected alternation of *solo* and *tutti* groups in the first 22 measures of the piece (about one minute). These alternations are clearly patterned. After several listenings, a contrast will be noted between the more angular ideas of the *tutti* passages and the more fluid, less clearly rhythmic passages of the *solo* instruments. An instructive comparison is with Chopin's *Fantasie Impromptu*, which is designed to sound as if it were being improvised on the spot. All repetitions of ideas are qualified by changes in length, in dynamics, in direction of line, in feeling of mass.

Chopin was writing at a time when individuality and uniqueness were prized. In fact, he invented forms rather than wrote in the accepted patterns. Even when he called something a sonata, unlike Bach when adopting the concerto form, he produced a maverick piece that did not clearly fit the concept of what a sonata was supposed to be. (To be sure, Bach was also an innovator, but in a different sense from Chopin.)

Students might next listen to the first chorus of High Society (references herein are to a recording made by the Bourbon Street Stompers). Is it free or controlled? (Initial student response is usually ambivalent.) Rhythmically and from the point of view of ensemble style, there are many similarities to the Bach. (Dixieland is a musical subculture but within the subculture certain classics have emerged. This is one of them.)

High Society features a clarinet solo that has become a set piece. Improvised at one time by a great soloist, it soon became so popular that every clarinetist was expected to play it. And because it is so much a test of virtuosity, it also became a typical audition test for Dixieland clarinetists. The soloist is "free" only in the sense that a modern performer is free when playing Chopin's Fantaisie-Impromptu: he is expected to sound spontaneous. The first chorus is generally heard as the most controlled or planned. One idea begins to emerge; within the ensemble, if certain parts are to sound free, other parts have to become relatively more regular.

The students might listen now to about the first thirty seconds of Dave Brubeck's Blue Rondo á la Turk, a work which draws upon concepts from both the formal "high" tradition in music and jazz tradition. A rondo is a classical form involving at least three themes played in various alternations, but, as a whole, creating a certain "rounded" or balanced feeling to the piece.There is a balance in this work. The first part is clearly planned and ordered. It is "blue" because it is in the jazz idiom. (à la Turk recalls eighteenth-century Europe, when exotic, noisily rhythmic pieces were known as "Turkish," whether or not they had anything to do with Turkey.)

Now students might consider which drummer is more free, the one in High Society or the one Blue Rondo. When asked this question initially, most students say High Society is more free. But the first chorus of High Society is really tradition-bound, almost cliché-ridden. Although the first part of Blue Rondo sounds controlled and planned, the drummer, when closely attended to, seems to be tentatively feeling his way, "getting the idea," finding a way to fit in. In the middle blues section, the alto saxophonist comes on as the freest spirit heard in either jazz piece. None of his ideas sounds repeated; everything sounds fragmentary, tentative, exploratory. However, in compensation for this freedom, the bass and the drums return to the old blues 8-to-the-bar regimented accompaniment.

A teacher handling this unit need not be a trained musician to make the desired points. All he need do is listen to each selection attentively - several times. Even the relatively untutored ear senses that musical forms reflect the spirit and the tensions of our age.

Session(s)

Topic: Music and Social Groupings

The aim of this hour is to reflect both the need for identifying with and the need for breaking with tradition. A good way to illustrate these needs is to play selections from the following:

Strauss's The Domestic Symphony, Verdi's Rigoletto, the Chinese Revolutionary Opera, and the pop opera Hair. (The Beatles are also useful as a "family," as symbols of Liverpool, and as belonging to the world of popular culture.)

One level of study is the literary content of these works. Plots and lyrics are the easiest areas to analyze. Analysis will reveal that the human needs that prompted these works do not differ in that they are different kinds of needs, but differ from ours only in that the traditional institution of the family in some instances is seen as an adequate vehicle for satisfying the needs expressed, but in others is felt to stifle the very life it purports to foster.

Verdi's Rigoletto is the most ironic in this regard. The strength and persistence of the "curse" motif in Rigoletto is directly analogous to the mystique of blood ties, paternal responsibility, and family honor which Verdi celebrates.

Strauss's use of the fugue to portray a family squabble suggests the twin needs of the individual to identify with a basic group and still remain apart. The general tonal organization, the formal direction and the musical goal of the fugue suggests this. The fugal subjects are to tonality and musical form what family members are to their mutual love and group purposes.

The Chinese Opera seems to be searching for new popular forms to express society's needs, a quality which is directly analogous to the new cultural philosophy which the text expresses. After this, Hair does not seem so revolutionary as it appears. Its musical forms are well established ones in popular literature.

Session(s)

Topic: The Functions and Value of Music

This session investigates what a society expects of its music, either as a potent means of reflecting itself or as a symbol of its own interrelationships. This investigation may be conducted by examining musical reflections of social stability, nostalgia, decadence, and freedom as found in the waltz: Johann Strauss's waltzes, Ravel's La Valse, and the waltzes played (and danced) on the Lawrence Welk TV Show. Such examination of the waltz will reveal that the waltz as a symbol varies as the perceptions of an age change.

Program notes to La Valse might very well be reproduced and distributed to the class. Readings describing Strauss's outlook and the atmosphere of Vienna might be assigned. Videotape excerpts from typical Lawrence Welk TV shows would establish another context within which the waltz is presented.

Ravel's La Valse is a symphonic poem conceived in 1906 and completed in 1920. (Recall the cataclysmic changes in European society during that period.) The work has been called the apotheosis of the Viennese Waltz. It can be approached in at least two major contexts: in terms of an overall cultural one and in terms of what the Western European tradition associates with the waltzes of Johann Strauss, i.e., Vienna and gaiety.

An abridgement of the film the Great Waltz is available for use in the classroom. The following is a description of the film:

Great Waltz

Abridged from the feature film. Shows the debut of Johann Strauss and his success on his first public appearance; then pictures a Viennese music store where Strauss's published waltzes are displayed.

Plays and shows the source of inspiration for
"The Beautiful Blue Danube," selections from
Die Fledermaus, and "Tales from the Vienna Woods."
Presents the people of Vienna and the Emperor
of Austria giving a celebration in honor of Strauss
A 1949 production. (19 minutes)

La Valse begins with Strauss-like waltz clichés. The listener feels he is hearing a development section of a symphony that has not been preceded by an exposition. But there is really an implied exposition. After all, listeners are expected to know where the Strauss-like fragments come from and how, typically, they would be developed. In addition, the listener is expected to play off his awareness of the characteristic mood and expression of the waltz against the different spirit of the beginning of La Valse. A theme gradually takes shape from the sparkling motives, moving through all sorts of rhythmic transformations into a complete form. The waltz theme is carried forward in a series of crescendi culminating in a crest which is ridden to a frenzied, ecstatic climax. La Valse reaches a climactic hysteria. There is a thematic disintegration and fragmentation, with all the ideas thrown together and against each other until the theme is finally destroyed.

By contrast, Strauss's waltzes reach a climax of controlled gaiety. What Ravel does is to invert the typical sonata-allegro approach which moves from stability (the exposition) to instability (the development) and back to stability (the recapitulation). In La Valse we have tentative fragments moving to a full-blown waltze theme and then to a brutal fragmentation. Since the term waltz itself connotes gaiety, La Valse in its frenzy, makes an ironic statement. Analogies to the fate of the upper and middle classes in Europe during the period form 1906 to 1920 should be obvious.

C. An Alternative Strategy: Word and Music Through the Ages

The musicologist's library is stocked with dozens of studies of continuity and change in the development of musical styles. His discipline demands study of the transition from the ecclesiastical modes to major-minor toanlity, study of the invention of contrapuntal techniques, and study of the evolution of the sonata-allegro form.

Every humanities student should become sensitive to stylistic differences. Unfortunately,the disciplinary approach of the musicologist is too technical, too abstract, and too esoteric in its language. A student can speak of color, line, and space in painting with more confidence than he can of harmony, texture, and orchestration in music. When the teacher proposes to him that music is one of the mirrors of human concerns, how can he relate scales, techniques, and forms to such concerns?

How can we avoid falling into an old trap? Medieval books on music theory had two halves--the first treating of the philosophy and theology of music, and demonstrating, for example, the principle that ternary rhythm is more perfect than binary because it reflects more closely the three persons in God. The second half was a practical manual of performance and composition. There was never a bridge relating one half to the other.

In an earlier unit the nude human figure was presented as an enduring form in our visual traditon. Is there a form that is the musical analogue? The single form that comes to mind is the song. Surely there is no culture without song. It might be useful, then, to trace the differences in the relationship between the words, the melody, and the accompaniment in the songs of several Western periods. This might serve the additional function of integrating the course's discussions of musical elements, forms, and expressive content in such a way that the course does not resemble a medieval book on music theory, which left unbridged the gap between meaning and form.

Reason and Feeling in the Song of Western Tradition

The following schema shows the development of song from prehistoric times to the present:

1. Prehistorical Music: "Speech-Song"?
2. Ancient Greek Music: Song as a Natural Expression of an Intellectual Ideal
3. The Middle Ages: Sacred Song and Profane Instruments
4. The Renaissance: Humanism, Awe, and Mystery
5. The Baroque: The Rise of Instrumental Music; The Invention of Opera; Word-Painting
6. Nineteenth-Century Music: Songs With and Without Words
7. Twentieth-Century Music: A Return to Primal Sources? Or Dehumanization?

Prehistorical Music: "Speech Song"?

Curt Sachs theorizes that the earliest form of human communication was somewhere halfway between singing and speaking and that eventually two distinct styles of song developed: one in which the melody is only an unassuming vehicle for conveying the words;

the other, less interested in the words, but more concerned with expressive discharges of feeling.[1] Whether or not Sachs' vision of prehistory is correct, his distinction is a valid one and clears the path to the battleground where wars over the aesthetics of song have been waged for centuries. And his notion of "speech-song" lends a certain symmetry to our discussion, as will be seen when certain twentieth-century styles are examined.

Ancient Greek Music: Song as a Natural Expression of an Intellectual Ideal

Plato remarked that the melody and rhythm of a song clearly must follow the words since they convey the idea.[2] Furthermore, the flute (aulos) should be banned from the Republic and song should be accompanied in an uncomplicated way by the stringed lyre (kithara).[3] The flute, Aristotle adds, is not a moralizing but an exciting influence, and should not be used for education, particularly since one cannot sing while playing it. Athena, he relates, once found a pair of flutes and threw them away because of the ugly way in which her features were distorted when she blew them. More important for Aristotle, however, was the principle that this wordless melody of the flute had no effect on the intelligence.[4] Song accompanied simply on the lyre was the ideal.

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[1] Curt Sachs, Our Musical Heritage, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), p. 4.

[2] Plato Republic, 398c-e

[3] Aristotle Politics, 1341b.

[4] Ibid., 399.

The Middle Ages: Sacred Song and Profane Instruments

The principal art music of the Middle Ages was the sacred chant. The setting was monophonic--that is, a melodic line sung in unison, without harmony, and generally without accompaniment of any kind. The text was important above all else, since the Scriptures and liturgy were the word of God. Melodic expression followed the expressed emotion or imagery of the text, sometimes in quite a naive fashion. In any typical Gregorian Chant setting of the word "Alleluia," which implies eternal praise of God, the single last syllable is set with elaborate figurations going on to twenty and thirty notes of melody. The chant is not merely art; it is primarily prayer. As Plato would demand that the artist in his Republic be a philosopher, so the early Church Fathers demanded that the artist in Christendom be a priest. Boethius repeats the old Pythagorean classification of three kinds of music: first, music of the universe; second, human music; and third, instrumental music. Instrumentalists, since "they bear nothing rational and are wholly destitute of speculation," are destined to be only the musical servants of song writers and critics.[5] But music, for Boethius, is a liberating art found above all in those who critically judge the work of the composer and the accompanist.

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[5] Boethius, De Institutione Musica, Bk. I.

Clearly whenever instrumental music occurs, as in medieval The Play of Daniel, it is either a repetition of the melodic line of the song (and an aid to singing on pitch) or an accompaniment to the dance.[6] Instruments in The Play of Daniel have strong connotations: the trumpet suggests the king; tiny finger cymbals suggest the queen and her ladies; nasal-sounding woodwinds suggest evil counselors; and the psaltery, harp, and organs are associated with Daniel and the other holy figures.[7] Note again the lowly place of the woodwinds.

The Renaissance: Humanism, Awe, and Mystery

In his descriptions of courtly life in Italy, Baldassare Castiglione recalls that even Achilles played the harp. So he writes, "I am not pleased with the Courtier if he be not also a musician, and besides his understanding and cunning upon the book, have skill in like manner on sundry instruments." The period saw a blossoming of secular as well as sacred song. The texture grows more and more complex. The accompaniment, if any, could be a variety of instruments: lutes, reeds, and bell-like contraptions. But the predominant forces are in the words and the melody. Gradually, and this was the complaint of the composer Monteverdi in the seventeenth century, the ever greater intricacies of the melodic texture take on a life often independent of the words. It is not uncommon to find motets with each of the separate voice parts in a different language (and even with a different content). As a study of the late Renaissance Mass suggests, the text becomes almost incomprehensible. An odd divergence takes place: as high art becomes more secular and relevant to the humanistic concerns of daily life, the sacred art becomes more complex and mysterious.

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[6] This is not unique to the West. All Oriental music is preponderantly vocal in character. Purely instrumental music, where it does occur, is essentially music for the dance. This is particularly true in the Middle East and India. Only in the Far East is there a certain independence for instrumental music. In the entire Old Testament there are only two references to instrumental music without dance or song: I Samuel 16:23 and I Samuel 10:5.

[7] Cf. notes to The Play of Daniel, Decca Records DL 9402.

The Baroque: The Rise of Instrumental Music, The Invention of Opera, and Word-Painting

The Baroque begins with a revolution against the intricate polyphonic settings of the late Renaissance. The very passages from Plato mentioned above are quoted over and over again by Monteverdi: the words must be primary! In fact, the effort of a group of Florentines to restore Greek drama, conceived of by them as a literary form in a musical settings, resulted in the invention of opera. (And paradoxically, for one of the few times in the history of any musical culture, instrumental music rises to an importance of its own. In the next centuries the classical symphony is born, with no text or literary references needed or asked for.[8]) But in the Baroque period, perhaps inspired by the same spirit that gave rise to opera, music became almost a visual art. C. P. E. Bach wrote in 1753 that it is impossible for the keyboard artist to arouse feeling in his audience without appropriate gestures. Only insensible performers would "sit like a statue before their instruments. Ugly grimaces are, of course, inappropriate and harmful; but fitting expressions help the listener to understand our meaning." Accompaniment parts become more independent but still are secondary in song.

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[8] Cf. Eighteenth and nineteenth-century symphonies.

Meaning in Baroque song is above all in the text, so much so that the melody, wherever possible, must be a "word-painting." If the text refers to something of high import the melody moves us; if it refers to waves or lullabies, the melody wavers gently to and fro. The description of Handel's integration of verbal idea and musical movement is an appropriate example. But word-painting could be carried to ridiculous extremes. One Baroque composer of passions sets the references to the nails of the crucifixion with musical sharps!

Nineteenth-Century Music: Songs With and Without Words

Kant placed music at the bottom of his hierarchy of the arts because it is the least conceptual. But, in the nineteenth century the philosopher Schopenhauer placed it at the very top because it is a direct expression of the Will to Power, an expression beyond the reach of language. Interestingly, in the nineteenth century words and concepts are always implicit in music even when not specifically indicated in titles or programs. Chopin wrote his Ballades--"narrative poems"--for the piano with no specific narrative mentioned. Mendelssohn wrote "Songs Without Words"; Brahms, in his ballade "Edward" for the piano, wrote melodies set metrically to words that are not present in the composition. Everyone in this century of rising nationalism quoted folk melodies, wherein, it was felt, lay the wellspring of the truth and feeling of the people.

Wagner argued that the introduction of words into the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony signaled the end of symphonic (or non-singing) literature.

The function of accompaniment changes. In Schubert's Lieder the accompaniment of the song became, for the first time, co-equal in expressive power with the sung text. Wagner carried this even further. In the first act of Tristan und Isolde, the two lovers spar with each other. Isolde wants an expression of love from Tristan which, because of his chivalric duty, he is bound not to give,in spite of his passion and yearning for her. Wagner puts all the power of this hungry love not in the words but in the orchestral accompaniment. The music contradicts the text. We are a long way from Plato.

Twentieth-Century Music: A Return to Primal Sources? Or Dehumanization?

All varieties of the relationships between words, music, and accompaniment occur in our own fragmented time. Sometimes voices are used as if they were instruments, as in Debussy's Sirenes. Stockhausen converts human singing electronically so that it sounds all but human, as in his Song of the Children in the Fiery Furnace. In Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire a new notation is invented for "Sprechgesang"--a new style of vocal declamation which is somewhere between singing and speaking, a kind of hyper-exaggerated inflected speaking.

This brings us back to where the discussion began, to Curt Sachs' primitive "singing-speaking." In spite of all the changes, we somehow find a continuity. Song somehow is always trying both to convey the concepts and images of the words and to discharge the emotions they express. But this integration needs continuing new stylistic formulation as the needs and values of the culture stress at one time reason, at another time feeling.

A teacher might do worse than to play appropriate samples for a class to demonstrate the changing relations between words and music.

D. Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Jacques Barzun, Music in American Life (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965).

As the cover blurb says, " a penetrating look at the virtues and vices of our musical culture."

2. ---------------, ed., Pleasures of Music (New York: Viking Press, 1966).

Organized around the topics of fiction, criticism, the musical life, fantasies and confessions, correspondence, and maxims and good stories. A delightful sampling of the literature of music that reinforces the editor's view "that music and the making of music are admirable subjects for comedy, high and low."

3. H. W. Janson and Joseph Kerman, A History of Art and Music (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., [n.d.].)

Written to fill "the need for a history-in-brief of art and music designed as an introduction to these fields in the framework of a general humanities course." Reveals similarities and contrasts in the history of both fields. Comes with a LP record containing musical selections from Plainsong to Stockhausen. Also contains glossary of terms and bibliography.

4. Leonard B. Meyer, Music, the Arts, and Ideas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

This is a study of present culture from the point of view of music as it relates to continuities and changes in society as a whole and in the other arts.

5. Julius Portnoy, Music in the Life of Man (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963).

Studies the changing roles which music plays in human history, from earliest times until the present.

6. Barry Ulanov, A History of Jazz in America (New York: Pyramid Books, 1957).

This work treats jazz as a development from a multiplicity of folk, popular, and serious art sources. It is more a cultural study than a study of musical forms.

E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

1. RCA Victor History of Music in Sound

2. For comparisons of "controlled" and "free" music: (a) Chopin's G Minor Ballad performed in strict meter and the same passage played by Arthur Rubenstein; (b) Basso continuo in Bach and jazz ostinato; (c) harmonic structure in Bach, Chopin, and jazz; (d) scalar and rhythmic patterns in Bach and jazz, Ragas and Raginos, Koto and flute accompaniment; (e) charts showing when and where freedom is permitted and/or expected in Chopin and Brubeck's High Society.

3. Regarding music and social groupings: (a) charts of musical forms, e.g., fugue structure, scene structure in opera, popular song structure, and comparison of musical forms of the Beatles and Richard Rodgers (b) comparison of different settings of texts in different popular song styles, e.g., Hair, the Beatles, song texts of the 1930s and '40s and Richard Rodgers.

F. Appendices: Suggested Additional Topics and Case Studies

1. Topic: Music and Human Nature

Compare the late nineteenth-century orchestra with the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

The Ellington Orchestra illustrates the tribal or "non-ego" style of creation and expression. The compositional ideas and arrangements were developed in the rehearsal and could come from any member of the group. There tended not to be a specialization of composition function (in the composer) and interpretative function (at one level in the conductor and at another in the performer). Rather, the approach to the artistic result was an intuitive "group-think." Communication was between peers, not between leader and follower, or between teacher and student, or between artist and interpreter. This can be seen in the scores themselves: often sketches of what might happen rather than directions as to how to proceed. And the tradition of the orchestra was close to a pre-literate level. For this reason so many members of the orchestra spent their entire careers with Ellington. This would be quite unlike Woody Herman whose directed explicit scores could be played by any number of literate virtuosi.

The nineteenth-century orchestra is a revealing contrast. For one thing, it was not dependent so much on the creative intuition of individual members of the groups as it was upon their technique and training in following leadership. The composer was not a member of the orchestra. Perhaps the performers never would see or speak to him. When direct communication was called for, it would be between the composer and the chief interpretative artist: the conductor. And it is the ego of the composer or of the conductor which predominates. Many composers, in fact, lament the individual performer's tendency to be "creative," that is, to misinterpret. The symphony orchestra becomes a model of the specialized style of an industrial society.

Audio-Visual Suggestions

Off-the-shelf media:	Recordings of finished works; recordings of rehearsals; recordings of jam sessions.
Specially prepared media:	Scores with special emphasis noting the efforts of the composer or arranger at control and other indications of freedom or of a range of interpretation allowed to the conductor or the performer.

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2. Topic: Music, Politics, and Economics

a. Analyze the relationship between works which are conservative (in favor of the established political-economic institutions) and those which are protesting or rebellious.

Do the conservative works follow the dominant musical styles of the culture? Do protesting works seek new musical forms and materials? Clearly there are exceptions, but generally, in stable societies music is more balanced in structure and feeling; forms are more closed. In changing societies, a symmetry predominates. There is less feeling of resolution and balance; forms are more open-ended. Compare the 40th Symphony of Mozart with Harold in Italy by Berlioz. Could a song like "Deep in the Heart of Texas" have become the number one popular hit during the war in Vietnam? Compare "Deep in..." with "Blowin' in the Wind." One asserts, the other questions. And musically "Blowin'..." is more tentative, more open-ended, less insistent on definitive cadences.

Other examples: Revolutionary Chinese Opera of the 1960s.
African songs of the twentieth century with nationalistic content.
Menotti's *The Consul*.
Mozart, *Figaro*.
Beethoven, Finale to *Ninth Symphony* ("Ode to Joy").
Shostakovich, *Leningrad Symphony*.
Palestrina's Masses.
Twentieth century African and "Big Beat" masses.
Richard Rogers, *Victory at Sea*.
Verdi, *Aida*.

Audio-Visual Suggestions

Off-the-shelf media:	Recordings of works mentioned.
Modified off-the-shelf media:	juxtaposed excerpts of contrasted musical elements.

Look into the effects of economics on opera, the Broadway musical, the recording industry, the big band era, on compositional techniques.

Before World War I Stravinsky was writing massive scaled ballets for Diaghilev. Immediately after the war the whole scale of his conceptions was changed. (Compare *Firebird* and *Histoire du Soldat*.) Not only have his productions been scaled down, but even the musical forms and the general expressive content of his work felt the impact of politics and economics.

Audio-Visual Suggestions

Off-the-shelf media:	Recordings of works mentioned. Scores of early and later works. Photographs of pre- and post-World War I productions. Statements of production costs. Copies of Union Contracts.

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3. Topic: Music and Social Groupings

a. Projects to be undertaken: study Bartok (as an "unknown") writing string quartets and piano concertos instead of operas and symphonies. (The composer does not even have access to the tools of his craft) Read the lives of Mozart and Bartok. How does society neglect and abuse its artists?

b. Music used explicitly as a means of establishing a continuity and identification for man:

a) Chopin, the Nazis, and Polish Nationalism.

b) Janis Joplin and the international spread of the "youth culture" (or counter culture) in the USA, Europe, and the East.

c) Gregorian Chant: the late nineteenth century and the Post-Vatican II twentieth century.

d) The recreation of "Greek Tragedies" by Peri and Caccini in 1600: the accidental "invention" of opera.

e) Contrast ancient (e.g., The Confucian Analecta) and Modern (e.g., Chinese Revolutionary Opera Movement of the 1960s) views of the relations between: "vulgar" music, ceremonial music, foreign music, aristocratic music, and folk music.

In the late nineteenth century the Monks of Solesmes were given the Papal commission to research, preserve, and restore ritual Gregorian Chant. The result was a style of plainsong singing which some musicologists believe had never existed before the nineteenth century (Cf. Gustave Reese, Music in the Middle Ages, pp. 57-248). Pope Pius X argued passionately that this "authentic" traditional style must be the model for all sacred composition. (After Vatican II, Gregorian Chant was replaced by vernacular masses.) These events illustrate the need for codification and institutionalization and the creation of "authenticity" even where it is impossible to achieve.

The accidental creation of Italian Opera as a rebirth of "Greek Tragedy" is another instance of the yearning for continuity. The resulting styles of Gregorian Chant and Italian Opera are masterfully beautiful achievements, but they tell us moreaabout ourselves than they do about the Greeks or the Middle Ages.

c. Music manifesting national imperatives; love of a people for their national heritage; everyday life, everyday concerns, everyday protests. For example:

"Teran Bulan" (Malaysia)
Smetana, The Moldau
The Rake's Progress
The Shi Ching of China
Grofe, Grand Canyon Suite
Environmental/ecological folk songs
Regional music and dances: e.g., Tatra music of Poland
  Black spirituals, prison songs, and work songs

d. The eighteenth-century symphony as social expression:

The possibility of large musical forms in the social context of eighteenth-century Europe can be seen as an expression of orderly end-oriented structure. The nineteenth century Romantic symphony might be offered as an illustration of different expressed needs: continuity sought in the use of folk materials, less emphasis on organic unity, more levels of contrast and emotional excitement.

e. Social quality and predisposition or social sophistication and music.

Contrast the meaning of the Play of Daniel in the cultural contexts of the twelfth century and in today's context.

The Play of Daniel was written by the "youth of Beauvais" as a popular expression. They borrowed folk songs, vernacular texts, Gregorian Chant, and Latin hymns wherever they could be fit in. (Perhaps they were like the youth club of a modern parish church putting on a Christmas pageant.) The ancient instruments all had specific, generally (and popularly) known connotations. The twelfth-century audience of Christian believers was the "average man in the street." What is the twentieth-century version of all this? Gregorian Chant and ancient folk songs are "high culture" and quite serious. One needs special preparation to grasp what once was ordinary knowledge. The audience is specialized and sophisticated. The performers are specialized musicologists, such as the New York Pro Musica. Is it at all possible to say that The Play of Daniel can never exist today as it did then?

f. The Renaissance Mass as a symbol of socio-religious hierarchies, e.g., the masses of Ockeghem and Obrecht.

There is a marked difference in the grasp that the Late Renaissance composer, the performers, and the general audience (as opposed to the clerical audience) had of the Latin text, the comprehensibility of the vocal lines, and the intricate texture of the counterpoint. In many senses the language and the music were meant to be impenetrable. Medieval and Renaissance manuals of music aesthetics and theory clarify an artistic hierarchy as complex as the contemporary socio-theological hierarchies of human living. The impenetrability created relative levels of sophistication or relative levels of awe:

The composer stands to the performer and to the audience as

God does to the priest and the people.

Pius X's attempts to restore Renaissance polyphony illustrate the differences between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries in the relation between Church and society. Post-Vatican II changes in musical liturgies clarify a new notion of the relationship between God, priest, and people. Twentieth century theology begins to suggest an "I-Thou" relationship where once there was awe, mystery and separation.

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4. Topic: The Functions and Value of Music

a. Examine different critical perspectives on what music does and what it should do.

Compare ethical theories (Plato and Augustine), expressive theories (Wagner and CPE Bach), mathematical theories (Pythagoras and Boethius), and organic theories (Stravinsky and Leonard Meyer).

Ethical theories (such as those of Plato or Augustine) find music to be an expression of an ideal of human behavior. Music embodying this ideal tends to produce a proper pleasure in the audience. The audience is thereby moved to socially useful action.

Expressive theories (such as those of Wagner or CPE Bach) suggest that the artist's experience prompts him to create a piece of music. This music becomes the vehicle which communicates that experience to the audience.

Mathematical theories (such as those of Pythagoras or Boethius) find that the form of the sensorily perceived music is an abstract intellectual order. The music is an instance or an imitation of a higher, ideal, more perfect order.

Organic theories (such as those of Stravinsky or Leonard Meyer) find music to be a sensory structure presented to the direct experience of the audience. The pleasure of music is the pleasure which comes in the contemplation of that sensory structure.

It is clear that some theories emphasize form, either as an intellectual abstraction or as sensorily present in the music (the mathematical and the organic). Some emphasize response, either in terms of a useful behavior or in terms of a communicated experience (the ethical and the expressive). The mathematical and the ethnical theories relate the music to something outside of it (an ideal or socially useful behavior). The expressive relates music to its own integral structure.

Each theory can be said to imply difficulties:

> The mathematical ignores stylistic change and the practice of the art.

The ethical cannot really deduce useful behavior from an analysis of the work.

The expressive cannot clearly relate the musical form to the experience of the listener.

The organic cannot relate the integral structure of the music to emotional response.

Specific examples of critical response show how certain theoretical models find a criticism justifiable while others can disregard the criticism as irrelevant:

> The 1950's U.S. State Department banning the exportation of a production of Gershwin's _Porgy and Bess_ because it "does not give a true picture of American Life."
>
> The official policy of the USSR on the function of music.
>
> Pius X, _Motu Proprio_.
>
> The African Dance has been presented in the U. S. as an example of national, ethnic, linguistic, and spiritual identification for black Americans.
>
> Stockhausen's aesthetic programs as revealed in the Japanese Expo.
>
> Leibowitz's theoretical justification of the twentieth-century School of Viennese Atonality.

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5. Topic: Acculturation

A study of the blending or the adaptation of cultures.

Jazz. The enormous spectrum of influences on jazz can be studied in such audio-visual anthologies as _The Riverside History of Classic Jazz_ (Riverside SDP II).

XIV. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: LITERATURE

...The historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.

T. S. Eliot

The major part of Western literature, which has been for two thousand years and more so deliberately interactive, the work echoing, mirroring, alluding to previous works in the tradition, is now passing quickly out of reach. Like far galaxies bending over the horizon of invisibility, the bulk of English poetry, from Caxton's Ovid to Sweeney among the Nightingales, is now modulating from active presence into the inertness of scholarly conservation. Based, as it firmly is, on a deep, many-branched anatomy of classical and scriptural reference, expressed in a syntax and vocabulary of heightened tenor, the unbroken arc of English poetry, of reciprocal discourse that relates Chaucer and Spenser to Tennyson and to Eliot, is fading rapidly from the reach of natural reading.

George Steiner

In its use of images and symbols, as in its use of ideas, poetry seeks the typical and recurring.

Northrop Frye

Poetry is more philosophical than history.

Aristotle

XIV. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: LITERATURE

Overview

This unit is designed to display both elements of continuity and change in the humanistic tradition. Focusing on tragedy in Western literature, students should come to appreciate the diversity within the fundamental unity of the literary tradition while acquiring some understanding of the historical development of the tragic form. The plays cited have been deliberately chosen for the numerous connections--both formal and thematic--that exist among them.

Objectives

1. To perceive the history of literature as exhibiting unity in the midst of diversity.

2. To gain some understanding of the origin and historical development of tragedy in Western literature.

3. To apply the skills of critical awareness developed in earlier units to new works.

4. To see the problems of self revealed in the perspective of tragedy.

5. To apply elements of the Aristotelian aesthetic (covered in Unit VII) to tragedies.

Assignments

1. "Guides to Reading" for Agamemnon and Hamlet (to be duplicated and distributed to students well in advance of the first and second hours of the unit respectively.

2. Aeschylus, Agamemnon (Session)

3. Shakespeare, Hamlet (Session)

4. Eugene O'Neill, Homecoming and Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (Session)

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Contents

A. Introduction
B. Suggestions for Teaching
C. Alternative Strategies
D. Additional Reading Suggestions
E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

A. Introduction

The general aim of this unit is to give students some picture of change within the Western literary tradition. Tragedy has been employed to fulfill the general aim for several reasons. One reason is that an examination of tragedy encourages a humanistic attitude. Another is that the great tragedies, despite the reading problems they may pose, hold universal appeal.

A great deal of latitude must be left in this unit to the judgment of the instructor. Even so, much more is included than can be covered with students who, for the most part, may be approaching works like Aeschylus' Agamemnon or Shakespeare's Hamlet for the first time.

Session(s)

Aeschylus, Agamemnon

First, it is important to recognize that the Greek chorus in a play like the Agamemnon is the linear descendent of satyr-chorus in the worship of Dionysos, for only with this understanding can the religious significance of the play be appreciated. (Any text on tragedy will outline the history of tragedy and its grounding in religious ceremonies honoring the god Dionysos.)

During competitions among playwrights at religious festivals, the Greeks saw representations of familiar legends and stories tailored so as to emphasize the deleterious effects of "sin." The sin of hubris, or pride, was the most fearsome of all Greek sins, just as sophrosyne, prudence or self-control, was the most prized state of mind. The ancient Greeks believed in a close interpenetration of individual action, the state and the divine will. Hence, for a man to assume personal glory for successes was at once blasphemous and seditious.

Sins of hubris and excess--placing undue emphasis on one aspect of life--are the primary sources of the flaws of the Greek tragic heroes.

In the play suggested for this part of the unit, the Agamemnon of Aeschylus, we see the effects of both these sins. The Agamemnon is the first part of a trilogy, the Oresteia, which deals with the fall of the House of Atreus and its ultimate redemption through Agamemnon's son Orestes. The Greeks who attended the performances of the tragedies were acquainted with the horrible legend of the Atreides.

(Students should be encouraged to read the entire Oresteia.)

Prior to a discussion of Agamemnon in class, a filmstrip with audio cassette from the unit "The Rise of Great Tragedy" assembled by Films for the Humanities, Inc., might be shown. The following is a description of the filmstrip:

> Filmstrip 1: The Origin of Western Drama: Dionysiac rite with sacrifice, satyr dance, dithyramb, Thespis and the beginnings of personification, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. 15 minutes. Narrated by Daniel Seltzer.
>
> (A second filmstrip, Filmstrip 2: The Language of Theatre, is also available as part of a package.)

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Brief Study Guide for Aeschylus' Agamemnon

(To be reproduced and distributed to class before students read the play.)

Guide to Reading

1. Based on the information provided by the chorus, in what respects was Agamemnon's killing of his daughter, Iphigenia, justified? Unjustified?

2. What is the attitude of the Chorus toward Clytemnestra? Why?

3. What important information is provided by the Herald?

4. What is Agamemnon's first intention upon arriving? What prevents him from fulfilling it?

5. How does Clytemnestra explain the absence of Orestes to Agamemnon? Are these the real reasons for his absence? If not, what do you suppose are the real reasons?

6. How does Agamemnon respond to Clytemnestra's effusive welcome, especially her insistence that he walk upon a purple carpet to his house? Does Agamemnon's speech here conform to the Greek disdain for excessive personal pride? Why?

7. Why does Agamemnon give in to Clytemnestra's request? What does this tell us of his character?

8. What part do Cassandra's riddles play in the development of the plot?

9. Why does Aegisthus consider this a sweet day of justice?

10. How does the Chorus respond to Aegisthus?

11. According to the Chorus, who will set the matter right?

Study Questions

1. If Agamemnon's death is fated as a result of the curse put upon his father, how is it that he is still responsible for his own fall?

2. In what ways are the role of sexes reversed in the _Agamemnon_? Cite evidence from the text and show why this is an important aspect of the play.

3. The conventions of the Greek theater prohibited the portrayal of violent action on the stage and yet violence is at the core of all Greek tragedy. In the _Agamemnon_, Aeschylus manages to _express_ violence without _depicting_ it. How?

4. How does Aeschylus use Cassandra and the Chorus to express impending doom? What images appear in their speeches to express these feelings? How successful are they? Why?

5. Outline the structure of the scene between Cassandra and the

Chorus.

6. Why does Agamemnon's stepping upon the purple carpet signal his end?

7. In Unit VII a section from Aristotle's Poetics was read and discussed. How well does the Agamemnon conform to the Aristotelian principles of unity?

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Session (s)

William Shakespeare, Hamlet

Shakespearean tragedy is so remarkable an achievement as to form a genre in itself. Shakespeare's tragedies embody unprecedented psychological, social and political insight in addition to dramatic and poetic genius.

These qualities are all present in Hamlet, a play many critics, scholars, and readers consider the finest ever written. The study questions for this hour attempt to reflect in an unpretentious way some of the problems in Hamlet criticism.

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Study Guide to Shakespeare's Hamlet

(To be reproduced and distributed to class before students read the play.)

Guide to Reading

Principal characters

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The melancholic and scholarly

nephew of King Claudius and son of former King Hamlet.
Claudius, King of Denmark. Ascended to the throne upon the death of King Hamlet, his elder brother.
Gertrude, Queen of Denmark.
Horatio. Loyal friend of Prince Hamlet.
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Disloyal friends of Hamlet.
Polonius. Lord Chamberlain. Counsellor to Claudius. A villain or a fool, depending on your critic.
Laertes. Polonius's son. Headstrong and hot-blooded brother or Ophelia.
Ophelia. Hamlet's love. Gentle but weak. Caught between Hamlet's affection and her father Polonius's strong will.
Fortinbras, Prince of Norway.

Plot*

Act I

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is studying at the University of Wittenberg when news of his father's death reaches him. Upon his return to the castle at Elsinore he is shocked when his mother hastily marries his uncle, the new King Claudius, who craftily succeeded to the throne in Hamlet's absence. As the play opens Claudius is busily engaged in diplomatic efforts to prevent the Norwegian Prince Fortinbras from invading Denmark to recover territory lost by his father to the late King Hamlet in war. Polonius, the Lord Chamberlain, is instrumental in advising the king in this matter (as he probably was in Claudius's ascension). Laertes, son of Polonius, is given permission to return to his studies at the University of Paris while Hamlet is ordered to remain at Elsinore. Hamlet has been courting Polonius's daughter, Ophelia, but Polonius demands that she discourage his advances. Hamlet's loyal friend Horatio reports seeing a spectre in the form of the late King Hamlet. Hamlet seeks the Ghost out and discovers the true circumstances of his father's death: that he was murdered by Claudius. Hamlet must confront his now awesome duty--to avenge his father's murder. To this end, he intends pretending to be mad so that he might plot Claudius's downfall without suspicion.

Act II

Polonius believes Hamlet's madness to be caused by Ophelia's new coldness toward him. Claudius is uncertain and sets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy upon Hamlet to uncover the true cause of his distraction. When news of the arrival of a troup of players reaches Hamlet, he plans to use them to guarantee the Ghost's truthfulness (the Ghost could have been a demon in disguise) by having them perform a play similar to the murder of King Hamlet.

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*Since students find the language of Shakespeare so formidable, it is advisable to provide them with a plot summary.

If Claudius flinches at the performance, Hamlet will be sure that the Ghost was true. Claudius's diplomatic endeavors regarding Fortinbras have been successful. Fortinbras has promised not to invade Denmark in return for permission to pass through that country in order to advance on Poland.

Act III

Claudius has decided to send Hamlet off to England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. At the performance of the "play within a play" Claudius is visibly affected. After the play, Hamlet encounters Claudius alone at prayer but still does not kill him. Later he confronts his mother in her rooms. Gertrude, frightened, calls out for help. Her cries are echoed by Polonius who has been spying behind a curtain. Thinking the voice to be that of Claudius, Hamlet kills the hiding Polonius with his rapier. The Ghost appears again to Hamlet, entreating him to let his mother alone and carry out his pledge to kill Claudius.

Act IV

Claudius uses Hamlet's killing of Polonius as a pretext for sending him to England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Hamlet escapes, however, and returns to Denmark where he contacts Horatio and Claudius by letter. The circumstances of Polonius's death have driven Ophelia mad and precipitated the return of Laertes who plans to avenge his father's death by storming Elsinore at the head of a mob of Danes. Claudius persuades Laertes to turn his anger upon Hamlet and the two conspire to hold a fencing match between Hamlet and Laertes at which Laertes will slay Hamlet with a poison-tipped rapier. Laertes is further maddened by news of Ophelia's death by drowning.

Act V

At Ophelia's burial Laertes and Hamlet fight at her grave but are pulled apart. Later Hamlet tells Horatio how, en route to England, he discovered that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were carrying orders for his death to England. Hamlet exchanged the original letter for another which ordered the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Laertes's challenge arrives and at the match Hamlet is wounded mortally by the poisoned foil. During the match the weapons are accidentally exchanged and Laertes is likewise mortally wounded. Should the plot against Hamlet have failed, Claudius had prepared poisoned wine to quarantee Hamlet's death, but during the contest Gertrude unknowingly drinks the poison and dies. As Laertes dies he tells Hamlet of the plot and Hamlet, realizing that he has but moments to live, kills Claudius with the poisoned foil. Horatio, wishing to die with Hamlet, raises the cup of poisoned wine but is prevented from drinking it by Hamlet who begs his friend to live and give the true account of his actions. As Hamlet dies in the arms of Horatio, English ambassadors come to report that Claudius's orders had been carried out -- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead. And Fortinbras assumes the kingdom and vows to restore order to the troubled country.

Study Questions

1. When the Ghost first reveals that he (King Hamlet) had been murdered (Act I, Scene v) Hamlet cries:

   > Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
   > As meditation or the thoughts of love,
   > May sweep to my revenge.

   Yet it takes Hamlet a very long time indeed to fulfill his pledge. Why? Is his delay justified? Why?

2. One important concern of Shakespearean scholars has been to get clear on what Shakespeare actually wrote. (There is a text called the Variorum edition which gives variant readings.) As publishers in Elizabethan England were not nearly so careful as their counterparts are today, and since many of the texts of the plays were printed from shorthand transcriptions made by members of the audience when a given play was still on its "first run," it is not hard to account for such variation from text to text. Hamlet's first soliloquy (Act I, Scene ii, ll. 129-159), for example, has generated much debate among critics of Shakespeare. The first line in most contemporary editions reads: "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,". Some scholars have made a case for the following reading which has "sullied" (i.e. defiled, made base or impure) instead of "solid": "O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt,". Part of the argument on both sides rests on textual evidence, but each side also appeals to internal evidence, i.e. features of plot, characterization, theme, etc. to make their cases.

   Based on this second sort of evidence, make and support a judgment as to the proper reading of the line. Be careful to show how the overall meaning of the play would be affected by your choice of a word.

3. The idea of revenge is central both to the *Agamemnon* and *Hamlet*. Compare and contrast the revenge motifs (themes) in both plays. Pay close attention to the notion of "honor" in *Hamlet*.

4. Give reasons to support the claim that "Hamlet, like Agamemnon, has a tragic flaw, though he is flawed differently.

5. In Act I, Scene iii, ll. 59-81, Polonius gives Laertes some fatherly advice. These precepts are often held to be both wise and sound. In what ways are they *not*? What evidence is there in the play that Polonius is more a villain than a buffoon.

8. There are many bonds of similarity uniting Hamlet and the Agamemnon. Discuss these bonds in terms of:

   a) Characters (Compare, for example, Agamemnon and Hamlet; Cassandra and Ophelia; Clytemnestra and Gertrude; Aegisthus and Claudius)

   b) Plot
   c) Fate
   d) The use of messengers
   e) Unity

9. Discuss the characterization of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. How are they different? Alike? What is their role in the plot?

10. How old is Hamlet? How do we know? Is this a significant piece of information? Why?

11. One feature of Shakespearean tragedy as distinct from Greek tragedy is the inclusion of a scene for "comic relief." The audience, it was felt, should be given some respite from the sustained seriousness and heightened tenor of the action. What is the comic relief scene in Hamlet? What are its chief humorous features? Is it the only instance of comic relief in the play?

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During the discussion of Hamlet, a film, Great Scenes from Shakespeare: Hamlet--Act III, Scene 1, may be shown. The following is a description of the film:

> Hamlet delivers his third soliloquy. "To be or not to be, that is the question...." Ophelia interrupts him and he rejects her, telling her to go to a nunnery. A 1970 production. 8 minutes.

Nothing brings Shakespeare so much alive as skillful performance.

Session[s)

Eugene O'Neill, Homecoming and Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

Although tragedies were written in England after Shakespeare and his contemporaries (by Dryden and Otway, for example),the next period of important tragedy is our own. Modern tragedy begins with Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg. In a play such as

Ghosts, Ibsen modified the idea of tragedy. Instead of a King Agamemnon or a Prince Hamlet, we have the "tragedy" of lesser people. Where Agamemnon and Hamlet struggle with pride or fate or duty, condemned by flaws in their character, heroes of modern tragedy are driven to ruin by forces outside their control.

It is impossible to think of the mature tragedies of Eugene O'Neill without the precedent of Ibsen and Strindberg, for they brought the tragic form to the subject matter of modern life: anxiety, neurosis, and sexual identity. These themes, eminently (though not exclusively) modern, are the stuff of O'Neill's Homecoming which together with The Hunted and The Haunted forms Mourning Becomes Electra--O'Neill's version of the Oresteia. Set in the Civil War North, we encounter the New England counterparts of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, Orestes, Electra, Aegisthus, et al., moving through a drama which is at once the same as and very different from its Greek precursor.

Tom Stoppard's play is the instrument whereby instructor and students can attempt an answer to the question "What is tragedy?" As a borderline case it should help throw light on the model cases thus far presented in the unit.

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Study Guide to Eugene O'Neill's Homecoming

(To be reproduced and distributed to students before they read the play.)

Study Questions

1. How does O'Neill make us feel the presence of the Classical Greek era in Homecoming?

2. Compare the functions of Seth Beckwith, Amos Ames, Louisa, and Minnie to that of the Chorus in the Agamemnon. Are Seth, Amos, et al. plausible characters? Is this an advantage or disadvantage to the play? Why?

3. O'Neill describes Christine Mannon as "handsome rather than beautiful." Why is this appropriate in view of O'Neill's source?

4. The dialogue in Homecoming is filled with signs pointing to its classical source. Cite five examples from the text and show the extent to which they operate on both an immediate and allusory level.

5. Homecoming differs from its model the Agamemnon in several important respects. What are they? Were these departures necessary? Why?

6. "O'Neill uses an artificial, stilted language in Homecoming; the speeches are almost wholly implausible." Why is this not a negative appraisal of the play?

7. Compare the motives of Captain Brant and Aegisthus; of Christine and Clytemnestra?

8. What is General Mannon's fatal flaw?

Study Guide to Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

Study Questions

1. "Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (R and G) is a tragedy turned on its head." What is the meaning of this claim? Is it true? Why?

2. At the opening of R and G, the title characters are playing a coin-tossing game. The coin repeatedly comes up "heads." After the eighty-ninth consecutive "heads" call, Guildenstern says, "It must be indicative of something, besides the redistribution of wealth." It is. What?

3. At one point the Player says "...every exit...[is]...an entrance somewhere else." This is the key to both the theme and structure of R and G. Why?

4. There are dozens and dozens of amusing parallels between the non-Shakespearean dialogue of R and G and Hamlet. Give two or three and explain why they are so effective.

5. In what way is R and G a critical commentary on Hamlet?

6. When seeing a production of R and G, the audience is generally thoroughly confused as to which is which. Does this matter? Why?

7. Guil: But for God's sake what are we to do?!
   Player: Relax. Respond. That's what people do. You can't go through life questioning your situation at every turn.
   Guil: But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves. We don't know how to act.

Is Guildensterns's plight a tragic one? Why?

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C. Alternative Strategies

The instructor might for any number of reasons find that the unit as outlined is not appropriate for his specific needs. In this section, therefore, several alternative strategies will be suggested.

The instructor might wish to adopt tragedy as the organizing idea for the unit, but might, for example, find it more fruitful to have the students read Sophocles's Oedipus Rex, Aristotle's exemplar of Greek tragedy, together with Cocteau's reworking of that play in The Infernal Machine. A similar approach could begin with a consideration of Sophocles's Antigone and then a move on to Jean Anouilh's modern version.

D. Additional Reading Suggestions

1. Sylvan Barnet, Morton Berman, and William Burto, Eight Great Tragedies (New York: New American Library, 1957).

   Organized into two parts: the first consists of tragedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Strindberg, Yeats, and O"Neill; the second consists of critical essays on tragedy by Aristotle, Hume, R.W. Emerson, E.M.W. Tillyard, I.A. Richards, Joseph Wood Krutch. Contains useful bibliography.

2. Robert W. Corrigan, ed., Tragedy: Vision and Form (Scranton, Penn.: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965).

   A collection of readings on tragedy and its forms from critics and philosophers. Useful collection.

3. Herbert J. Muller, The Spirit of Tragedy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956).

A highly readable account of the vision of life reflected in tragedy, with special reference to its historical connections, its philosophical issues, and its implications for both life and literary purposes. Author takes "the old-fashioned view that literature is not self-contained, self-sufficient art form, but a comment on life."

4. Richard B. Sewall, The Vision of Tragedy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

An excellent analysis of the various forms which have embodied the tragic vision. Tragedy, claims the author, "calls up out of the depths the first (and last) of all questions, the question of existence: What does it mean?"

5. George Steiner, The Death of Tragedy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).

An insightful analysis of the fate of tragedy in the modern world by a major literary critic.

6. Lionel Trilling, The Experience of Literature (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

Excellent for commentaries on dramatic works of sophocles, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Chekov, Shaw, Pirandello, Yeats, and Brecht.

7. Morris Weitz, Hamlet and the Philosophy of Literary Criticism. New York: World, 1966.

In attempting to answer the question "What is criticism?" the author passes in review the major criticisms of Hamlet from A. C. Bradley on. "The Criticism of Hamlet," says the author, "is a paradigm. What can be said about its aims, doctrines, procedures, disagreements, issues, and assumptions is applicable to the criticism of other works of art." Accordingly, the volume is also relevant to Unit VII, Canons of Judgment.

8. John Dover Wilson, What Happens In "Hamlet". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935.

A major work in Hamlet criticism that treats textual, exegetic, and dramatic problems as distinct yet requiring interdependent solutions.

9. Sophus Keith Winther, Eugene O'Neill: A Critical Study. New York: Russell and Russell, 1961.

A good critical survey of O'Neill's early and major works.

E. Additional Audio-Visual Suggestions

(Available from major film libraries.)

1. The Greeks: In Search of Meaning
26 min. color

2. Hamlet, Lesson 1: The Age of Elizabeth
28 min. color

3. Hamlet, Lesson 2: What Happens in Hamlet
30 min. color

4. Hamlet, Lesson 3: Poisoned Kingdom
28 min. color

5. Hamlet, Lesson 4: The Readiness is All
31 min. color

6. Shakespeare's Hamlet (A Tony Richardson production with Nicol Williamson as Hamlet)
117 min. color

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